

What is an exhibition?  
Dealing with how people  
experience art, artistic works,  
making art and the appreciation of  
things, via a contextualisation of  
Allen Carlson and Emmanuel Kant  
aesthetic ideas and 21<sup>st</sup> century art  
theory.

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## Preface.

When viewing artistic works as a participant or observer I should be able to enjoy all kinds of artistic practice and created works. What is apparent is my taste and knowledge in some case comes in the way when experiencing art. Should we distinguish the differentiation between artistic practice and art? How does this create my understanding of making artistic work even though my artistic practice has little or no real function, if one was to observe it via specific laws, natural understandings or specific thought patterns? My understanding of art and my own artistic practice is in some case problematic in my mind; to solve this problem I have attempted to construct a theoretical research project that in some way allows me to create an understanding of this problem. I am attempting to provide a base surrounding how my artistic practice is a relevant form of engagement. This will be done via the following form of contextualisation. The relevance of understanding of what makes things art and how is art experience as an aesthetic interactive process in relation to everyday life. The research conducted is part of my artistic practice since my reasoning for painting is to engage in an activity that allows me to do what I want within a set of determined boundaries that I am creating or limited to. These boundaries are my limitation, skill, and ideas/execution of ideas or theoretical understanding. To create an artwork for no other reason than to satisfy my own need to produces art is often rejected as an example of artistic creation/practice, a form of *art for art sake*<sup>1</sup>, or in my reasoning it is the inherent property of me as an individual. In some form the created conjunction that anything can be art, and the argument that creating works of art without much context, fails to be art, creates a fallacy. To create artworks that follows this notion—making works of art for the sake of making art—can be argued to exist on the surface but is restrained when one is engaging in such a practice; an example would be the difference between

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<sup>1</sup> The *art for art sake* in this case is un-related to the original meaning. The function in this case is to describe art being created in a manner that does not exclusively follow a set of ideas or political ideal, but is open to change.

amateur and professional artists, where the armature artist is doing it for some pleasurable experience focusing purely on the aestheticism of the work.

Hence my reasoning for focusing in on aesthetics and art theory, these are the predominate constructs of art. Within this work I will attempt to bring the observation of aesthetics and art theory together, developing an understanding of art in relation to contemporary society and constructing an understanding of why we need to engage with art at all. Raising the question if art is needed then why should it not explore all the possibilities that are available in artistic creation. If I create works that I call art with no other reason than a drive to do so, how does that differ from any other means of creating artworks? If I am participating in a sort of practice, what makes this practice an art practice and if such a practice is artistic does the outcome therefore become a validation for the object or created work to hold a status of being art or an artwork. I can begin by creating an example based around reasoning for creating a specific type of artistic works.

Example:

The observation of a person's daily life within an active city environment; there is a general notion—amongst a certain group of people—towards the belief that we are constantly bombarded by images, which is having a negative effect on us.

Justification for using such reasoning in relation to created artistic works:

Artists formulate a practice based around the idea of visual stimuli within the city landscape, making the assumption that to have a meaningful experience, such stimuli should be reduced into a bare minimal activity. In some case the belief of limiting the amount of stimuli is a way to achieve a more enlighten experience thereby become more aware of one-self and the city environment.

If the creation of an artwork is somehow in need to make people reflect on the artwork and their surrounding space/life then my interpretation or belief is that a created artwork shall and should compete with the everyday stimulus. In the end each artwork created or not created, each aesthetic experience had or not had, affects a person's life. Such effects are only noticeable when these things stand out or create a reflective thought. This is why the need to compete with the everyday image or experience is required. The competition is not one that should be observed as a capitalistic competition, but as a struggle within the aesthetic experience through a developed artistic theory, against the need of creating artworks. The limitation of stimulus as an active part of the constructive artwork is fine, however the problem is when such limitations are becoming an active part of the whole collection of works. This ingrained belief in the construction of something that is undoubtedly a lacklustre idea, a series of work surrounding an idea or artistic style, is another form of limitation, a derivative to make us into posteresque<sup>2</sup> creators.

In closing, the need to explore this form of research in relation to a development of art as a theory based practice, through aesthetic and artistic theory should be conducted via an in-depth observation. Developing a construct that demonstrates how my practice is justifiable, i.e. the creation of random things is as valid because of our interaction and change in social and environmental landscapes (referring to city scape and living space). In the end art or the creation of artistic work in my mind if such work is created following a series, unless the series is the point, then it should not be properly pursued. If one assumes the following:

*The more assumed freedom we get the more limitation are acted upon us, these are becoming more visible within society, but has been present within the artistic world even though the proclamation of the End of Art was made. Even*

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<sup>2</sup> Posteresques is an adaptation from the picturesque, referring to posters, and how images/paintings, art created objects, are just posters or become stylistically similar to posters, how teens place posters on their walls to signify something relating to their lives.

*though art was able to free itself from traditional means of artistic practice, via the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the creation of Readymades and the development of video, performance etc. such freedom is only limited in my mind to what I can call art in relation to my practice as an artist.*

I have therefore created some examples that hopefully deal with some of these issues in the following list.

1. The discussion of what is art or what makes art today is redundant.

Answer: By reasoning that there is a differentiation of what art is or raising such an issue the problem becomes a debate in relation to our taste. The discussion should possibly relate more closely to what makes an artist, an artist. We can see these issues brought up by Kant, and contemporary art theorists.

2. Art for art sake.

Answer: Derived from Kantian thought and has a relation to the artist as a person who engages with the beauty of the world, though its origins is in relation of artist having no set moral or social purpose.

3. Space and placement of artistic works.

Answer: This point is important to make. In many cases the space wherein artworks are placed will have a determining factor how such works are read and as such an understanding of space and environment should be considered.

4. Our developing experience within contemporary society.

Answer: Linking back to space and placement, the change in how society appears and function today is incredibly different from the total period of human existence. When therefore viewing artistic work or taking part in making artworks, such differences is often not observed or considered.

5. Art for the elitist.

Answer: Art for the elitist is not a statement relating to the elitist within a social standing, but rather referring to a group of people who are engaging within a specific activity. So in the case of art, the elitists are people who are actively taking part in viewing, exchanging, or making art.

## **Introduction a brief overview and setup of the coming text.**

This thesis deals with the observation into how artistic practice and art, when being observed and created, hold a problematic relation. Since in most cases a person's subjective view of what art is holds a connection with their taste. The problem with taste and its relation to our experience of art is that the outcome of the experience is affected much more greatly, something that causes problems with exploring the artistic sphere. To deal with these issues the thesis will be split up into sections dealing with specific subject matters that have a relation to the observation of viewing and experience.

The first section, will deal with an observation of two philosophers—Allen Carlson and Emmanuel Kant—their relations to the understanding and experience of an environment. Starting with Allen Carlson's theoretical argument surrounding the aesthetic experience of the environment. This section will build up a general overview of what Carlson argues towards the aesthetic experience of an environment. The aim is to show that one cannot focus on the assumption that the experience of viewing is not affected by our own placement at the time within a specific environment. The logic behind using Carlson is to provide evidence that we are untimely affected by the smallest of things. If our experience of an environment has an effect on our viewing of such an environment, then an understanding of an artwork in relation to its creation and viewing becomes difficult to confirm. If my understanding of the work is and will always be affected by the environment of such work, then its relation unless specific to such environment, will become problematic.

Why Kant and not Hegel? I am making the observation using Kant because of his relation to aesthetics and development of artistic theories. Kant's ideas are in some form reflected on the approach of neuroaesthetics. Kant's subsequential observation



surrounding what art is compared to things such as craft, and the difference between work and artistic practice, constructs a link between contemporary art theory and the neurological observation that I have undertaken. Hegel's writings do have a more concrete focus relating to freedom and art, historical interaction etc. These are touched upon briefly but as a relation to the *End of Art theory*. Hegel's *End*, fits in with an observation of history and a struggle of freedom. For Hegel the observation of art laid within the attainment of truth, art acts alongside philosophical thinking and religious observation. The connection with Hegel's understanding of art or the notion of an ideal art having a relationship with religious understanding and philosophical thinking in the achievement of truth. Kant's writing does project a more focus on the observation of nature. Now if we assume that things created by us, as human beings are natural, then Kantian thought can in some form fit into the observation of artistic practice.

By observing the difference between Kant and Carlson the understanding of how one is experiencing and understanding a space and the environment become clear. This is extremely important since if I am observing an artwork, its observation is in relation to the context it is placed within. Now if this place or space has already a predetermined identity, or I am viewing it in a specific way, then such experience should be taken into account.

*I know that a white cube contains artistic works, and as such my judgment of such works are in relation to my experience of belief of what art is. If I have a specific belief anything which does not conform to such a belief is regarded by me as a non-artistic work, or something I do not like.*

If a person's background knowledge of artistic theory or they hold a strong belief within a specific field of artistic study, then the aesthetic experience will be the same when viewing artistic works. However the person's judgment of the works via their taste will be different, changing the experience of the artwork for the individual. Here lays a problem when viewing artwork in relation to the creator's intention via

our background knowledge. In this case the reasoning of studying a link between interpretation, knowledge and observation comes in to play, since it allows me to demonstrate the effects of knowledge upon interpretation have on viewing.

What will become clear is that a person's background knowledge determines the judgment made, *referring to Kant as well as some neurological studies*. Within this case an example will be made by also viewing the relationship between Kant and Greenberg, it demonstrate how knowledge or the need to project a specific idea from ones knowledge has a determining and limiting outcome. Even though one would say I am observing things with an objective eye, the observation is in relation to art or cultural activity, via a limited field of view, hence I will make observation of artworks in relation to the current topic matter, to provide a placement for some discourse.

It becomes problematic to draw a solid conclusion that deals with observation and experience of artistic practice, if the observation is done via artistic studies/research however if the viewer (*of artistic works*) allows for the disinterest in the notion of style as an aspect of research (*referring more to 2D artworks and series*), then an action to justify creating artworks in a multitude of ways is possible. It is through such an interaction that the development of things such a painting series has become the restrictive part of artistic practice in relation to the field of painting, a part that should be ignored when focusing on making works of art.

I know that viewers of artworks are still going to be affected by their knowledge; as such those judgments made on my artistic practice will become problematic. To deal with such a problem of understanding my observation move onto an observation into artistic theory, relating to something more substantial than Kant, Greenberg and Carlson. The outcome of this observation is to demonstrate and in some way show, how one of the main concerns with artistic practice is not the observation of art, but rather the observation of what an artist is. What makes an artist an artist,

instead of a craft person and how does this reflect on the usage and advancement of artistic theory?

The establishment of art will be then observed through our evolutionary process. By simply affirming to that art exist one is failing to justify the development of such a reasoning, also by doing so, the reasoning rely on that art, in such case is possible for everyone. What the evolutionary and biological observation does show is a difference between art, and that of aesthetic satisfaction. Since this is somehow the case, to argue that the production of specific artistic works are determinately more valued or needed, or the fact that everyone should engage in artistic practice become problematic. I will demonstrate why this is, and thereby creating a link and moving onto the observation of aesthetic experience.

The final part provides a distinctive view on aesthetics. This affirmation will distinctively provided in some form a changing differentiation between artworks and object; experience of things such as an everyday occurrence compared to things which are considered more important i.e. art, it is possible to have an aesthetic experience during the everyday. It will also raise an observation into how the brain works when observing specific things that in some case are considered to be artworks. If we make the proclamation that one has the understanding of art being art due to their constructed brain patterns.

In closing, some propositions will be constructed, first there is a simple criticism one can already make surrounding the structure and interaction between the chosen subject matters within the text itself. There can be as much link between Carlson and Plato as with Carlson and Kant. The bases of Greenberg's misuse are somehow irrelevant to a contemporary context and the discussion is not entirely egregious as a mainstream idea. Within the arguments surrounding the aesthetic experience these outcomes share little impact. People still experience artworks even though they may or may not have had any connection with Greenberg's assertions. Their viewing of such works still has an underlying relativism to the above declared

statements. Through the active participation of viewing art, within the specific context that is often presented, the observer will gain an experience or knowledge of how such works shall be treated. My argument convey on a double sided conjunction that can in some cases only be solved by attaining either to a detrimental ending, everyone can do art and should engage within such practice, or that there should be a overall hierarchy a form of elitist within the art world that excluded and formulates artistic practices.

# Carlson and Kant. An observation over the experience of environment and space.

## 1. Allen Carlson.

Carlson's affirmation is towards the development of how we experience an environment. The mundane assertion would be connected to the aesthetic belief that we hold. We see or observe an environment for its beauty or for a form of pleasure, a reason for some to go away from our more predominant city lives. Carlson's deals with some of these questions in order to construct a better understanding towards the relationship between us as humans and us as beings placed within an environment. Most of these differences are related to the actual experience of an environment and viewing. People tend to view the environment through a notion of pictorial observation whiles the experience of the environment is through the interaction and knowledge of the position of oneself within the space.<sup>3</sup> A good example is the relationship between the experience of an environment and the visible observation of such environments through photographs, cinema or television. The relationship becomes interwoven between our knowledge of the environment as a framed image/experience and the space we inhabit.

The importance of starting with observing Carlson is towards building knowledge in relation to viewing and experience. If the distinction between the two becomes clearer then for me the relationship of viewing an artistic work and an everyday object or experiencing an artwork and a space becomes more visible. Similar to how one view the environment an artwork is often viewed and not experienced.<sup>4</sup> What

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<sup>3</sup> Allen Carlson, *"Aesthetics and the Environment, The appreciation of Nature, Art and Architecture,"* London, Routledge, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> There are works of art where the experiences of the work is the main part of it. In this case I will conform to things such as the experience of a city environment, which has been developed in a way for the experience of that city to conform to a specific

becomes clear is that the experience and viewing are interwoven. By following Carlson's idea we can learn more about how we can use it in conjunction with Kant to create an understanding why in some case my taste affects the outcome of my judgment on artistic works.

### **1. a) The viewing of the landscape and the mirror.**

Carlson points out that our modern view of the landscape has been brought about from the use of the Claude glass.<sup>5</sup> The Claude glass is a mirror that served as a way to frame and focus the viewer's observation on to the landscape by limiting the field of view by enhancing specific colours and the contrast between light and dark areas.<sup>6</sup> The apparatus as a cultural tool allowed for the artists of the time to focus in on specific parts of the landscape while constructing their paintings, though as stated in *Aesthetics and the Environment, The appreciation of Nature, Art and Architecture* by Carlson the mirror was also placed upon travels as a means to observe the landscape,<sup>7</sup> similar to modern day digital cameras. Many people have a tendency to view their landscape through the lens (this is a phenomenon present within some computer games whereby the notion of capturing specific landmarks or specific observation of the environment within the game brings about an award). Carlson points out that it was from the point of the Claude glass that people removed themselves from the environment they inhabited and viewed it from the framing of a mirror, a frame or a viewfinder; this is the beginning of the idea of the picturesque.<sup>8</sup> The aesthetic experience that is placed upon a person is not through their placement within an environment but rather a placement within the viewing of framed landscape.

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sense. I experience Paris differently from Rome or New York. This does not mean that the experience I am having is one that is not through the form of viewing.

<sup>5</sup> Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment*, 45.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

So how does one view the environment through the framing of a landscape and why does this create a problem within the aesthetic experience of the environment one is placed within? Carlson brings about the argument that one is experiencing life through a number of interactions within today's society. People can judge their experiences and movements as a person through the viewing of film and plays. These observations are brought about from emotional connections within the medium and we share an emotional feeling when we observe a cinematic drama, because it holds some resonance to our own lives. An example could be the emotional connection with observing a cafe' scene in a movie where two characters are interacting with each other, and observing people within a café in real life. The experience of being at a café is only enhanced by the viewing of such experience via mediums of film, television or plays. The same applies to the viewing of an environment. The experiences of these events or viewings are through our connection of the visual culture that surrounds us.

*I will point out that this also happens when viewing art. We view art through a form of framing, one that is constructed in relation to our knowledge and experience of viewing artworks. I know that most people will view my work as paintings as long as they are placed on the wall or if I say they are paintings. I can attempt to break this notion of framing or rather an objectification of the paintings within the space by creating works that are unrelated. Most likely it will not happen. The reason being that the artworks, unlike an environment, are part of the environment they inhabit, a sort of object within an environment. Since we view the environment via the framing, which allows for the objectification to occur, the outcome of viewing artworks within any space will always be via this form of objectification. By allowing for this understanding that an artwork is in itself objectified allows for the conflict between observing and experiencing art.*

The problem with this form of viewing is that an aesthetic experience is only achieved once we have viewed the world in a flattened manner. An example we can

observe is the interaction between black and white photography and the romanticism of slums or rundown areas. The observation of rundown areas within a cityscape such as the concrete estates in England is often viewed upon as an ugly or demoralising experience.<sup>9</sup> These rundown estates, seen to be an eye-soar by many, have become romanticised by the use of black and white photography. The buildings are enhanced by a skilful use of framing and the technical abilities of the photographer bringing out certain details while withholding others. So once a person visits these places they are viewing them through the photographer's eyes experiencing the place through an aesthetic ideal, similar to that of heroin chic. This is unlike the experience shared by the occupants of the estate who would see the building as a depressing area, a place where they are stuck, while others from the surrounding area can see the buildings as an eye-soar.<sup>10</sup>

Carlson points out that our experience of things changes through our perception or rather the knowledge of the context by which such things or objects should be experienced. We do not drink cognac the same way as we drink beer.<sup>11</sup> We do not observe an environment such as a cityscape the same way we would the natural landscape. This is due to, depending on the environment, one tends to look for specific reference points to obtain the specific required aesthetic experience in relation to its context and knowledge of such an experience. For example when observing a sunset or sunrise, one is not observing the beginning of a new day or end of the day, the experience is of observing the sky's colour change. While as mentioned above the viewing of cityscapes is through an experience/knowledge of image-based mediums such as photography and video observation, sometimes but not always relating to that of either gritty suburbs or the fast pace of modern life.

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<sup>9</sup> Due to the lack of stimulating interactions since we are in need of these as a species, the relationship between stimulates and our self will be brought up later.

<sup>10</sup> For some people these types of buildings are considered holding a cultural value and therefore seen as being something preferable. This often only happens in areas where the cost of living will be high due to location of the buildings one example would be the South Bank in London.

<sup>11</sup> Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment*, 64-68.



Though the start of experiencing nature or the environment around us comes from the adaptation and use of a tool to control perspective, colour and framing of landscapes for painters, it has evolved into a more complex use of technology. By following this sort of reasoning, the aesthetic experience of an environment—to be considered to hold any form of reward or noticeable impact—can only be achieved through the observation via a lens or a frame.<sup>12</sup> In some sense it is the framing of an environment that causes the experience of such an environment. Now it is clear that we do not continually walk around with a mirror or a camera. The form of framing that these tools provided, are not used in our daily lives. However when I am walking down the street or experience an environment my attention is towards a limited formation and this formation comes in a way as a framed viewing.

### **1. b) Framing of landscape.**

The active framing of a landscape is a subconscious process, to create a more engaging aesthetic experience; henceforth a pictorial view of the environment is part of what has been the practice in the past. For this to be in effect the observation needs to have some form of framing. The content within the frame needs to provide an emotional resonance, that allows for the viewer to feel that the experience they are having is agreeable. Within the framing of the environment a person views this depending on the formal qualities that are present within the framed environment. This is based upon the balance present between shapes and colours, a bad landscape painting or photograph is bad because the viewer is incapable of finding any balance within the work. The same works for the aesthetic experience within the environment. One tends not to watch the sunrise/sunset behind a tree or in a tightly packed forest. These events are mostly observed when the view/framing of the actual sun is most visible. Carlson makes a point that the experience of the natural environment is also linked in with the knowledge of that environment.<sup>13</sup> So the aesthetic experience of a sunrise/sunset, should be possible behind a tree, if one

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 32, 45.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 17-18, 25-26.

has the gained knowledge of this event. This however can be argued against, as the aesthetic experience is only achieved through the change in light levels, thereby bringing out the detail of the tree. One could claim that the experience is rather an aesthetic experience of observing the bark of a tree in changing light rather than an observation of the sunrise/sunset. Observing a sunrise/sunset in this case is an observation of the sun and not the bark on a tree, the whole premise fails, because one can always say the experience of sunrise/sunset is always determined by the perception or experience of the sun. If one is still observing the tree bark and still has a sense of the sun, having ones back to the sun, one will still be able to feel the changes within the suns physical presence, becoming warmer or colder, in this case the premise should hold true.

The problem with Carlson assertion is that a person requires knowledge of the environment, to experience such an environment. In Carlson's mind this would remove the problem of framing. Now there are some issues that can be raised with this mainly concerning our relationship with viewing and experience in the set environment. The example of the sun is a very distinctive example when relating it to the act of viewing, i.e. there has always been a link between humans and the sun. Thus such viewing of the sun is always depending on this relationship. Most people know that the sun brings life, now and throughout history, (unlike art in some way where the viewing of works has been in a changing flux). Since I have a knowledge of the effects of the sun, my experience of the sun should be equally as adequate when viewing the change in light conditions on a tree. The problem being in this case I am no longer viewing the sun but the tree. We can see this placement of ourselves within the environment as a form of framing. We are still creating a framed view of the environment due to our positioning within it.

The positioning of the viewer therefore plays an important role when viewing an environment, since it activates their framing of such an environment, allowing for an experience to occur. Since the viewer is placed within the environment they should observe the space from their position. The fact that people view environments

within a set framed perimeter the viewer is actively removing him or herself from the environment and viewing it from the outside. A person views the environment/landscape that surround the top of a mountain rather than the top itself, an environment that is distant and away from the viewer but framed within the viewer's field of vision. Carlson points out that the framing of the environment is an attempt to prioritise the most useful or rather the most aesthetically pleasing part of that environment<sup>14</sup> allowing the person to be more involved and focused. But it also makes the environment into a form of object, the things within the frame are objects that can be observed and appreciated, the smoothness of a pebble or a dried out piece of wood.

There is an important link between object and our relation to what an object is, referring to a non-descriptive property. The fact that an environment can be an object, the same as an object is an object, an artwork can be an object, and an object can be an artwork. Contradictory to most observation, if this position of being an object is present within our viewing of things that should not contain such an affirmation, then the proclamation of this is an object to anything becomes redundant. Reasoning in such a way is because we are either observing things in a form of objectification or we are attempting to view things in a non-objectifying manner.

If we observe a Kantian notion then the experience of a space, in this case it is linked with the environment, is our surroundings. His view is that everything surrounding us are objects.<sup>15</sup> So when I am creating paintings or artworks, I am creating not art things but objects. If this is the case then these are objects with an aesthetic property that either causes pleasure or displeasure. Now this is a wrongful argument to make since artistic practice is far more complex. Our way of viewing is more complex. Though it does provided an example that demonstrates how a person can view things as object unintentionally even when they are viewing art.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 45-46.

<sup>15</sup> I provided a deeper discussion on this topic in the section on Kant.

### **1. c) The object within the landscape.**

The appreciation of objects in nature for most people can be linked to the observation or framing of these objects. A smooth pebble is more appreciated than a sharp rock on a beach. Here the textured surface structure determines the aesthetic value of the stone—even though both are the same thing—the texture of a smooth pebble brings about the right aesthetic experience, visually and physically, as such the pebble is an object within an environment. Depending on this environment and the objects within this environment the aesthetic properties of these objects (pebble) will determinate the judgment made on the landscape. People tend to appreciate the objects within a landscape, the presences of a rock formation, or specific trees, plants or animals. By moving through an environment the objectification occurs. Though we have the opportunity to see trees every day the specificity of the tree or its aesthetic beauty only appears or becomes more predominant if the trees have become objectified. The same is true for the framing of the landscape. The objectification of the landscapes content brings about the construction of the aesthetic experience. Since the experience needs to incorporate a positive one an ordinary tree, which is not objectified, cannot be seen to be aesthetically pleasing. This objectification of the environment is again a removal of the observer from the environment. One example would be a common bird such as a seagull. Not many people would argue that seagulls are aesthetically pleasing and therefore have little emotional connection to the bird. If one then objectifies the seagull by either observing it through a frame situation or place it within an environment where by the seagull is constrained the bird becomes an aesthetic object. If one would further the objectification of things within an environment an environmental disaster such as oil spills helps to enforce this. The viewing of the environment is through an objectification of its content. We view either the oil, or the wildlife covered in oil, or the rocks covered in oil. The environment becomes a moral aesthetic question and we project a moral aesthetic view onto it. Creating an

objectification of the environment based on our moralistic beliefs on the viewing of such a disaster, some would argue that an oil spill is aesthetically beautiful.

Resuming back to artistic practice, the mentioning of objectification within the environment to make the environment a positive experience draws similarities with observing art. I am objectifying the works in a manner that allows for the proclamation towards the work being artworks. The objectification is towards the acknowledgement of works present in front of me, when viewing or experiencing art, as art. By doing such objectification, not making the works into object, but objectifying the works into something that can be valued, it becomes a factor that determines my experience of viewing the art.

The problem with objectifying an environment is that it removes the initial construct or idea of the environment; one is no longer viewing nature in the form of nature, like the framing through a technological object, the objectification removes us from nature. One is no longer within the space or the woodland but merely walking through the environment in search of an object to gain an aesthetic experience that would allow us to say that we enjoy the forest. Carlson points out that the experience of an environment does change through the knowledge of the environment.<sup>16</sup> Using Mark Twain's description of experiencing a river as an example,<sup>17</sup> whereby Carlson points out that the objectification of the environment is less visible, since knowledge of the environment is obtained via an interaction and study of the environment. Similar issue can be found consisting within art more closely related to the history of images as an objectification of women and the nude; in this case the nude/naked, is a way for the objectification of erotic pleasure to be placed within paintings or images. In such a way, that it did not elude to the social values of the time.

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<sup>16</sup> Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment*, 17-18, 25-26.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 17.

These forms of objectification are still present today and are similar to how we observe the environment. It is about presenting an aesthetic ideal that stimulates and pleases the viewer. When constructing artworks, especially painting or visual images, such an ideal is somehow still present either as balance of colour, surface structure and style. We can further such a list and bring it into reliance with most visual images, drawing, printmaking, and photography. If the works need to have some form of message they need to conform to these sort of objectification otherwise the message will be disregarded due to the observers disinterest in the work. There are some cases when one can argue against this, and there are artworks where such things are played upon.<sup>18</sup> In these cases it is often our relationship between the viewing of the work or place and our knowledge.

*We can see that in some form by objectifying things we are removing ourselves from these object/things, however, in many cases this form of objectification is a crucial part of the experience. We can also agree that when viewing or attempting to experience something we will objectify such an experience, such as participation in sexual activity. In some case this is a form of objectification. Or our objectification of other people while walking home at night, in this case the objectification of others is in place to see if the people we meet are going to be a friend or a foe. Now these are fairly simple examples but it is worth to keep in mind. Since not only do I objectify things, I do so through my knowledge of such things.*

#### **1. d) Knowledge and placement within an environment.**

Carlson's argument towards the experience of an environment is dependent on our knowledge surrounding that environment, as this knowledge changes the experience of the environment changes.<sup>19</sup> An environment that is observed daily

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<sup>18</sup> Richard Billingham's photographs on his family can be viewed as an example where the images do not fully conform to the notion of objectification in an aesthetic manner.

<sup>19</sup> Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment*, 17.

will be viewed with less intensity than the environment that is new; the new environment will be viewed with an almost innocent eye. The viewing is directed towards specific colours, experiences, shapes etc. It is viewed as a picture or experienced as a cinematic film for example the viewing of Paris or New York has a specific place within culture. An example would be a person who visits these cities is less likely to divert from viewing specific sites within the city are well-known and have some form of culturally constructed background. People experience these environments through their gathered knowledge of them; you view the Eiffel tower, the Statue of Liberty etc. taking appropriate pictures. The experience of a local Parisian or New Yorker probably does not include taking pictures of the famous sites, or even visiting them. It is their knowledge of the environment of the city that defines their experiences of that environment, as such their movement around and love of the city is dependent on such knowledge.

Another example pointed out by Carlson is the knowledge of the creation of stalagmites and stalactites, allowing for specific people to enjoy the caves that incorporate these objects.<sup>20</sup> The problem with Carlson's argument lies within the treatment of knowledge in relation to experience. A person's knowledge of cave formation drives their interest in exploration of caves but a person can still enjoy a cave formation, without the knowledge of its creation Carlson's opinion on this is that the enjoyment is aesthetic, pictorial, while the expert within the field enjoys the facts behind the caves construction. The same applies to a city. We can observe people on holiday in London they will possibly find the underground an interesting experience and environment. On the other hand residents of London might not have the same feeling due to their knowledge of the underground.<sup>21</sup> By

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Knowledge plays a very important part surrounding our experience of things. The problem is deriving a difference between knowledge-based judgment and that of an aesthetic judgment. I do not agree with Carlson in the sense that when a person is having an experience of the environment, such an experience does not depend on their knowledge of such an environment. Since a knowledge base for Carlson seems

demonstrating the London underground argument we can see Carlson's failure. In Carlson opinion, both people would or should not be able to experience the underground as anything as positive or negative. Since Carlson would only see a person who is or has knowledge of the underground function, construction and workings, to have a true experience of the underground.

I think this is a really important point to make and observe in the sense that we can observe places and get used to them causing our viewing of such environment/place/space to change. A similar thing can happen to a person who is viewing and creating art. We can recognise how the experience of a city/landscape environmental can become stagnated or change into a general active part of everyday life, as a background noise almost. By deduction we should be able to draw the same conclusion when it comes to artworks, the practicing artist is no longer exploring an artistic practice but resonating within what they find comfortable or agreeable. What is clear is that people can justify such actions by referring to their practice or conducted practice as either a style or constructed research. The artist may have matured through the years of practice, in their viewing and focus of production, but their works have stayed the same. In some cases we can say that it has become a sort of hobby.

In a way we can counteract this problem by observing Carlson following up his reading of Kandle Walton's essay on aesthetics.<sup>22</sup> Carlson points out that knowledge or the categorisations of objects determine the aesthetic outcome/reading. The example proposed by Carlson is that of reading of an elephant and its size.<sup>23</sup> A person who has knowledge of a specific sized elephant would consider small elephants as cute and innocent, while others whom have only observe pygmy elephants would view the same elephants as a grandeurs, empowering and fearful

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to be some combination of scientific knowledge combined with a form of Theological knowledge.

<sup>22</sup> Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment*, 54.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 60.



animal.<sup>24</sup> The relationship between the viewing of the elephant and the knowledge of the elephant size determines the viewer's aesthetic reading of the animal. Carlson points out that the reading of an object follows on to the categorisation of that object. By allowing for certain type of categorisation within the objectification it can allow for a more focused observation. We tend to do this in special occasions such as when viewing or creating art, viewing images, or when paying attention to our surroundings.

Walton's observation is on Pablo Picassos *Guernica*.<sup>25,26</sup> The categorisation of the painting can be used to determine an aesthetic reading of the work, which can be summarised as true or false. The arguments are:

1. *Guernica* is a painting, made up of shapes.
2. *Guernica* is an impressionist painting, made up of shapes.
3. *Guernica* is a cubist painting, made up of shapes.

The first statement is true. *Guernica* is a painting made from oil on canvas with defining shapes. The second statement would be determine to be false due to the attained knowledge that impressionist paintings share a specific categorical aesthetics, which does not include the properties possessed by *Guernica*. Therefore *Guernica* cannot be an impressionist painting. The third statement can be seen to hold a property of being true, through an elaboration by stating that Picasso was intending *Guernica* to be viewed as a cubist painting, therefore painted it the way he did. People will view the painting within the category of cubism due to Picasso's relation and dominances within the field and therefore acknowledges the aesthetic choice of the construction of the painting. Statement three is however false, *Guernica* is a painting made up of shapes but it is not a cubist painting, the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Picasso, Pablo, *Guernica*, Oil on Canvas, 349x776cm, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain, 1937.

<sup>26</sup> Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment*, 56-57.

difference lay within the construction of the work in relation to the idea of cubism. By relating Picasso to cubism does not confirm a work as being cubistic in style.

Knowledge and categorisation such as these can be placed onto an environmental position such that:

1. The Atacama is a desert, and the world's driest place.
2. The Sahara is a desert, and the world's driest place.
3. Antarctica is a desert, and the world's driest place.

Here the statement depending on knowledge will determine whether it is true or false. The categorisation of a place, such as a desert, will contain the property without rainfall. Most people view the stereotypical desert to be the Sahara. Their knowledge would acknowledge that statement one and two are correct, while three is false. The aesthetic reading of these places to determine that they are deserts through the presences of specific properties allows for this conclusion. Since Antarctica is mostly ice, and ice is water, the notion of Antarctica to be a desert is false. Now if one would observe the categorisation of what a desert environment is, without rainfall as the main property, then Antarctica is a desert and the driest place on earth. Therefore statement one and two are in part false and statement three is true. The gathered knowledge of these environments is the determining factor of how a person reads them and experiences them. A picture of Antarctica is not the defining picture of a desert nor would many people make the statement *I am visiting one of the world deserts, Antarctica*.

For these examples the aesthetic judgment is based around the knowledge of either the subject or environment. Through a collectivised gain of knowledge based on a streamline adaptation of art history and culture a large portion of the population would agree that Guernica is a painting and it is based around the style of cubism. For the painting the properties of the work is part of its categorisation and construction. While environmental properties are somewhat in certain occasion

independent of such categorisation and thereby the aesthetic experience and judgment made on an environment is different. Specific environments, such as the rain forest—can be used to provide an example of an exception—expectation that it will rain in a rain forest is often agreed upon; the property of rain is related to the experience of being within the environment of the rain forest. It is this reason why the statement of Antarctica being a desert for many would be false, due to their relationship between the visual observation of a desert and then a factual knowledge of a desert.

We can see how knowledge has a great effect on the outcome of judgment on the viewing/experience one is having. Also it affects our relationship to our surroundings. We can objectify a copy of an image/painting and items within such an image and thereby allow for us to categorise such items and the image itself, then use this as a basis for the enjoyment when confronted with the original. The observation of copies or images of artworks or environment, in relation to observing the original, brings about interplay between expectation and realisation to occur, thereby bring about the enjoyment. On one level this is how the enjoyment of a cityscape or environment works; we can observe place around the world in images or films, placing ourselves within these places creating a fictional understanding of such a place, so when we arrive and experience these place it is done via our need to experience as the image or film has created the fictionalisation of that place. If the environment or image is in fact not a copy but a real thing, the experience of observing such a thing over and over again, can become uneventful.

### **1. e) Afterthought on Carlson moving onto Kant.**

My usage of Carlson lay within the experience of an environment and through an active knowledge of such an environment scientifically. It seems that for Carlson an environment is not enjoyed properly without this form of knowledge. Similarities can be seen and is often present within the art world today and in the past. Within the field of painting and the semiotic placement onto objects/figures/characteristics is well documented. To understand the created

artwork the viewer needs to understand and have this sort of semiotic background in order to experience the observed work. If a person does not have this knowledge the observation of the artwork will be limited towards our sensory perceptions and judgment. This in some form is the transformation between Carlson and Kant; Kantian observation of art in its relationship to nature and Carlson's observation of the Claude glass, which functioned to reflect nature but in a more idealised fashion.<sup>27</sup>

We can observe some more interrelating structures between the presented ideas by Carlson and Kant. The analysis and relation to knowledge and experience will be covered later on since it is visible within large section of theoretical studies. Kantian theoretical writings process more complex observation, such as our relation to space, our understanding of things and how we observe these things in relation to understanding. I am finding that by contextualising specific ideas, it is becoming more apparent that art or rather *Fine Art*, is problematic when approached through a disjointed observation. We could, and most people will argue that to approach this disjointed form of observation is in fact a form of luckless knowledge based, undecided understanding, surrounding the contextualisation of artistic practice.

So why cover Carlson at all, well in my understanding and reasoning, Carlson has provided a form of grounding, in relation to how the experience and observation of things occur. It is clear that in most cases people tend to observe things in an order to have some form of experience. The problem being that I can say, *I enjoy watching a sunrise*, many people will agree with having and watching such an experience. Moving on to make the claim, I am enjoying contemporary art, and participating in such activity differs when put towards people who may enjoy a sunrise. This is either reasoning behind taste more relating to Kantian thought, or we can see that Carlson in some sense is right with stating that one needs to have some authoritarian notion i.e. *"I know something about this and I know more than you do,*

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<sup>27</sup> A very far-fetched position one can consider is the relationship between Kant and the Claude glass, as both appeared within the same century.

*as such my judgment will be better suited for this situation*". In many cases the outcome becomes stagnated since I will reject certain forms of artistic practice even with knowledge of such artistic practice and the artwork presented to me.

An opposition via a Kantian notion can allow me, to express a differentiating point of view; one that is similar to Carlson's but differs when explored in depth, the relation between observing and experiencing a space, and how such an experience has a determining factor to how we behave and adhere to such a space.

## 2. Kantian philosophy.

An overview of Kantian thought will be explored surrounding things such as the environment, space, and the sublime, in relation with Kant's argument on judgment, as a part of what is the difference between taste and judgment. The reason for exploring Kantian philosophy in this way is to articulate a better understanding of the field of aesthetics and the aesthetic experience. (In relation to Carlson, the observation of an environment as an aesthetic experience does not suffice in developing a specific understanding of our initial experience that occurs when viewing. The arguments made surrounding environmental aesthetics can be seen as holding a separate excursion from that of an artistic aesthetic experience. Carlson focus on the natural environment has provided an interesting overview of our current experience of the environment. But I believe that there is a clear case that Carlson writings lack complete conviction and therefore a closer observation of Kant is being made to bring about my position relating to art and the aesthetic experience of art.) So why make this distinction? Within Kant's text there is a relationship between the observations of art in relation to things such as the environment, and elements of the physical world create to formulate an argument by which a system is created to account for the aesthetic judgment, taste and experience. The outcome of this form of Kantian thought, is what has had an influences on theorists such as Greenberg; his use of Kantian thought subsequently causes a disenfranchisement towards Kantian theory by art theorists who preceded Greenberg. By a first glance on some Kantian discourse there is a clear problematic placement of experience of things and our relationship towards these things In this case one can observe the idea of taste.

*If someone does not find a building, a view, or a poem beautiful, then, first, he will refuse to let even a hundred voices, all praising it highly, prod him into approving of it inwardly. He may of course act as if he liked it too, so that people will not think that he lacks taste. He may even begin to doubt whether*

*he has in fact done enough to mould his taste, by familiarising himself with a sufficient number of objects of a certain kind.*<sup>28</sup>

The problem, as stated by Kant, lies within the application of taste or how a person subjectively uses taste in relation to how their judgment is applied. The statement provides a very observable claim, one that is visible within society. Even though people might have a disagreement of taste towards a specific object, environments or ones idealised artistic work. The influences upon that person will make them question their taste. So why is this important for the observation of, (1) the experiences of the environment and (2) the observation of things such as art? If one's judgment cannot be changed but only questioned, then how can a person make a proper critique of objects, surroundings or art? To understand this it is important to first cover Kant's ideas.

Kant's writings around art and nature is interesting and holds a value to it when covering Kantian theory; the link between how art is derived from nature and how nature is something that holds specific values. To talk about art in relation to Kantian theory, one cannot just ignore specific positions or observation proposed within his writings. Since for Kant, art's relation to nature, and nature's relation to other things are interlinking the dismissal of one aspect does not satisfy to bring about a valid conclusion, in my mind. This form of focused observation on Kant in some form can provide a link to Carlson if done via a very abstract formulation in regards to us being derivatives of nature, and part of nature. Raising the question of the purposiveness of artistic creation and aesthetic gratification being part of human nature.

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<sup>28</sup> Immanuel Kant, "Extracts from *Analytic of Aesthetic Judgment* and *Dialectic of Aesthetic Judgment*, in *Critique of Judgment*," in *The Continental Aesthetics Reader* ed. Clive Cazeaux (London, UK: Routledge, 2000), 17.

## 2. a) Space.

Within *The Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant focus surrounding an understanding relating to the perception of space in relation to our present self, and how we observe the space surrounding us (the external space), the link between space and knowledge and our internal space. Kant brings up the notion of an internal relationship between ourselves, soul, and the internal space the soul/we inhabit.<sup>29</sup> By this creation of the inner space, or the internal, the internal space does have a link with experiences of time. Time for Kant has a relation to the experiences of recalling of specific memory and how we experience things according to their placement within space and time. The internal space holds properties that are not inherent within the experience of the external space, internal space refers to the space that our soul inhabits on a metaphysical level. The external space is surrounding us; we observe this phenomenon as being without us, as an external placement, that we place ourselves onto through our sensory perceptions thereby creating the experiences of space. Space as a concept removed from our sensory experience as a metaphysical property of pure presence is different and can be viewed as similar to our internal space when brought to a finite state.<sup>30</sup> There is a difference between the internal space and the external space. How does Kant define this difference?

If there is a difference between the internal space—occupied by us—and the external space that we interact with, the internal being metaphysical, does the external space contain a property that the internal does not? Can one argue for the existence of space and time at all?<sup>31</sup> Kant deals with this problem by introducing the observation or experience of objects through sensations placed within the external space. This sensation is a form of intuition; Kant has two forms of intuitions, pure

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<sup>29</sup> Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, trans, J.M.D. Meiklejohn, (A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2010), <http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/kant/Critique-Pure-Reason.pdf>, (accessed June 9, 2012), 49.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 51-52.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 52.



intuition and empirical intuition. Pure intuition is a person concept of space and time and is placed in relation to what they perceive. Empirical intuition is the application of pure intuition of space and time onto sensations.<sup>32</sup> As such a relation between the empirical intuition and objects lay within the formation of specific phenomenon, we experiences object via a specific order/arrangements of phenomenon that creates the form.<sup>33</sup> (Within the mind the creation and understanding of things happen.) For example, if one removes all material properties from objects, the one thing that remains is the shape, a property that is pre-proposed within the mind, this is the pure intuition. Kant points towards the possibility to train our pure intuition without any need of sensations or experience. This exercise is partially a basis for geometry and mathematics.<sup>34,35</sup> The mind does however only hold the simplistic form/shape. It cannot produce all the elements, which determines the object as Kant reveals that we are unable to come up with things, which we have not yet seen or experienced. One could see this as a contradiction to what Kant later on describes relating space within knowledge. But the form/shapes referred to are on a metaphysical level within the mind and being the fundamental construction of most objects that we can perceive, the pure intuition. One cannot recognise a starfish without seeing one, but the shape of a starfish; the geometrical shape of a star, the star shape, can be broken down to further simplistic shape of interlinking triangles that exist within our minds. We recognise these shapes and therefore recognise the starfish when one is observing it from such a fundamental level (pure intuition, the shape of a star, triangles etc.) and whiles higher levels of cognitive processing allows for the development of the starfish to form (the structure of the starfish, its textures and colours).

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/prolegomena/characters.html> (accessed December 18, 2012).

<sup>33</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, 50.

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/prolegomena/characters.html> (accessed December 18, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, 50.

The experience of our surrounding space is not through the direct input from an external experience such as objects, but the experiences we have between the internal selves, a defined space (the body) and external surrounding, which do not occupy us, but is occupied by us. The external experience is a preceding circumstance, which the internal place itself on to. Therefore it is very difficult to attempt to present a non-existent space.

*We never can imagine or make a representation to ourselves of the non-existence of space, though we may easily enough think that no objects are found in it.*<sup>36</sup>

In some forms we can view this observation and reasoning by Kant, that space itself is part of our understanding, one that is predetermined from birth or that something that is within us. However it is now understood that our perception of space develops as we gain an understanding of senses of self as we grow up. (In the development of our self there are several different stages. Through research these are becoming more identifiable and provides evidence that we develop our senses of self through our childhood and adult life<sup>37</sup>). Our positioning within this world as a singular body that moves about expands as the development and understanding of others and objects surrounding us. For Kant this understanding seems to be pre-existing and nothing that we develop but rather learn to understand. Through an interaction with surrounding objects we learn to understand the shapes and textures etc. Kant therefore concludes that the experience of space is in the end based around intuition. This intuitional level of spatial understanding as quantified by Kant brings in the understanding of a singular space and thereby any other of spaces is just spaces within this one defined space.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>37</sup> Philippe Rochat, "Five levels of self-awareness as they unfold early in life," *Consciousness and Cognition* 12, (February, 2003): 717-731, doi:10.1016/S1053-8100(03)00081-3 (accessed November 17, 2012).

*For, in the first place, we can only represent to ourselves one space, and, when we talk of divers spaces, we mean only parts of one and the same space. Moreover, these parts cannot antecede this one all-embracing space, as the component parts from which the aggregate can be made up, but can be cogitated only as existing in it. Space is essentially one, and multiplicity in it, consequently the general notion of spaces, of this or that space, depends solely upon limitations.*<sup>38</sup>

By applying this notion to space, Kant moves onto defining the quality of space as an infinite property, in the terms: the space that we can think of, can be thought of, in infinite different ways/representations, as such the understanding of the spaces are on the intuitional level. Even though we can conceptualise these many different levels or representations of spaces, the initial idea of space is none the less linked to the intuitional understanding from the mind. The example Kant provides is one based around geometry and the angles within a triangle. Two sides of a triangle will always be greater than the third, Kant argues, that it is not due to the lines and triangle itself by which this conclusion is drawn, but rather the intuition of the person, since for Kant the notion that two sides of a triangle is greater than the third already exist within us. To understand that one side is shorter than the others within the triangle does not require the visible triangle due to our own inner understanding of the concept,<sup>39</sup> in relation Kant does state that space is not a concept even though we can understand the properties or specifics of spaces as one.<sup>40</sup>

An important point to observe is how the argument is dependent on our inner knowledge or intuition to create an experience of space. In away this is somewhat truthful in the experiences of an environment and observation of artworks, films, objects etc., have a connection with an inner intuition. Experiences that are

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<sup>38</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, 53.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

developed or learned create an understanding of interacting with the surrounding space and objects allowing for the intuition to become more learned according to Kant. An example would be how we behave within specific spaces or situation, as determined by our intuition that has develop through the years of social interactions. We do not go to the toilet in a bin during a lecture, unless it is done so for either amusement, shock, if there is something wrong with us (mentally, physically, intoxicated etc.), or to prove a point. The provided example can be argued against as a form of moral and social context. We do not do it because of these reasons. The point is that a space by which we associate ourselves, as pointed out by Kant, is within a form of intuition. I understand that I am within a lecture room/class room by the objects and shapes and external space, which will initially bring about the reasoning that this is an area of social interaction and not a toilet. In the end the moral and social inputs placed onto a person will determine their behaviour within a space, a space does not define the outcome of a person's behaviour it merely provided a certain platform that a persons experience exists within, while they move through it, encountering objects that define the space. (The problem within the above example is that the behaviour in relation to placement is not as clear as stated, one can be within a specific place and behave in a specific way, not because of ones intuition but rather of one's moral position or moral upbringing.)

There is specificity within the assumption that space is a place for the existence of objects to embody. For Kant, the argument he projects is that objects exist within the space, whiles the space does not exist as a function towards the existence of objects or their relationship towards each other.<sup>41</sup> The objects are independent of space, due to the inherent properties of space as mentioned above, the internalised intuition of space. But it is through our experience of the external senses, touch, smell and sound that brings about the initial experience of space. Kant argues that we as humans cannot experiences space without objects in a physically descriptive

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 54.

way. Referring back, on how one is unable to image a non-space in part, the experiences of a space is so determined that even though our internal intuition has predetermined understanding, it does not function until the spaces is experienced with the combination of objects, allowing us to make a conviction about whether or not things exist within our perception or are an external interaction. *“(S)pace contains all which can appear to us externally, but not all things considered as things in themselves, be they intuited or not, or by whatsoever subject one will...”*<sup>42</sup> By universalize the experiences of space, Kant reasons, that for an individual experiences, a notion of limitations with a created space can be perceived or is created when the relationship between objects and space are observable. He states, *“All objects are beside each other in space.”*<sup>43</sup> The limitations are based around our experiences of objects surrounding us. The experience comes from our sensory observation of objects within the space and due to this observation one cannot make a universally valid judgment. The fact that one person might see things differently from another, in part to make a valid universal statement of space, one has to remove the observation via sensory experience, by asserting that objects are phenomena and viewed as an external interaction within a space. The objects are acting upon us creating the experience of space.<sup>44</sup> Kant therefore moves on to propose that objects are realised as individual things within our sensory experiences. Allowing for the experience of space as real due to all the external interactions, with the possibility of that there still can be nothing for us to experience.

The sensory experiences of things or objects are a form of sensation that only describes a property of the object. There can be differences between colours and taste, and each person will have their own experiences of these things. We can all see the rose as an entity but the initial experiences and observation of the rose will

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

be individual to each person.<sup>45</sup> One person might not see the same rose as another, therefore a space does not or is not a property of something nor do we have the ability to understand its properties but rather a function that allows us to relate to the surroundings. Kant's specific notion is that space is our sensibility towards the surroundings in the construction of representation.

Kant's attempt to provide a solid argument that allows for the understanding of space in a physical form—as a conceptual undertone—holds some ground by placing itself within a notion of experience not being a physical but a combination of the physical sensation with pure intuition. We can create a formulaic problem for Kant's theory; or rather create a space that does not function within Kantian observation. Let's imagine a conceptual art space that is a non-physical space. Now since the space is a conceptual artwork, we can place a physical property onto such a space.<sup>46</sup> A space that is undefined but still exists on a metaphysical level therefore the experience would rely on our pure intuition. Now it is clear that Kant states that the pure intuition can be experienced and practiced. However if the conceptual space is to hold some physical form such as a concept of physicality, as a conceptual artwork, then the argument will present some problem. This sort of space cannot ever exist. One can always argue that Kant's intentions are to describe the idea of space therefore any space that is described or analysed can be viewed in the terms of Kant's argument. Even though the space's intention is artistic our experience of the space is still to be a space like any other. The problem with this assumption is that we are determined not to experience spaces in different ways. Our sensory

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>46</sup> The conceptual argument or rather the reasoning behind the work is to determine whether it is possible to create a physical space within a non-physical space, as a take on the proposition of a soul governing a human body. Therefore the work is to explore the metaphysical in relation to the physical. The work will be set up by inviting people into an empty space (this space should be completely dark) and tell them to imagine or create a physical space within themselves. The physically created space needs to be real in a physical way. When the person is moving through their space they should be experiencing it the same way as they move through any other physical space.

perceptions such as touch, taste and sight, for Kant; function to determine the dimensions of the space via the interaction of individual objects that exist within the space we inhabit. What should be pointed out is that the understanding of space should include the objects within the set spaces as well as the intuition sense of understanding.

Rather than attempting to find a universal judgment of space, the judgment should be placed on individual experiences of space. To do this one should understand that the construction of space is not just the properties of some shapes, but also the differences of these actual physical spaces. One example would be sitting at a desk at home and sitting at the office. Both spaces may be very similar though different in sensory perception. But even though one might not be able to detect these sensory perceptions the initial space is still defined as being different. Using the example one can say that if one was to recreate a person's home in the office perfectly, then the experience of the space should be the same as when one is at home. However this is not entirely true. Some might say it is, but there will be that perception that you are at work in a space which reminds you of home. The space is the same as home but not home. Under Kant's theory surrounding space these two places should be the same and experienced the same. If one is to accept this notion it is dependent of observing only Kant's explanation of space and not recognising empirical intuition. Due to the initial placement of the space, one being real the other false, the experience cannot be the same. A person will recognise a false space due to their empirical intuition. Since the experience is through the space and time, a person will be aware of the differences between the spaces unless the perception of time becomes distorted thus creating a change in their empirical intuition. Time as such plays an important role when relating to space. Time for Kant was related towards memory and acted alongside with space and was towards the perception of objects and experiences thereby creating empirical intuition. So when placed within the office, even though it looks like home, the person will know they are not at home.

Due to time and its relation to the space they are inhabiting, they arrived at the office at a specific time, which will be in correlation to the time spent at home.<sup>47</sup>

What this tells us is that we are bound by specific spaces and our relationship to such spaces has an effect how such space is experienced. For example I know I am viewing art when I am in a space that is associated with artistic practice or the display of artworks.<sup>48</sup> We can in some form understand that this connection can be held responsible for people's dislike or disassociation when viewing artistic works in a specific spaces or why people dislike specific forms of artistic practice taking place in art galleries. Now it is clear this is only one factor that effects the viewing and experience. If we take into account that of Carlson's environmental aesthetics, we can develop a more rational position in understanding; when we are viewing art such action will already have had a form of judgment placed upon it (the artwork) before we even enter the space such work is inhabiting.

## **2. b) Judgment.**

Moving on to the resolution of Kant's written part on aesthetic judgment and its relation to things such as beauty, nature and artistic works. To begin this section, one needs to first look at what Kant's idea of judgment is. Kant states that judgment is thinking under a defined *Universal*,<sup>49</sup> the universal being an ideal, a rule or law.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> As a side note this type of logic is often explored within films or TV series where the question of reality or finding ones true home is explored. The main character will have a distinctive knowledge of their home or place where they have been position. The relation to Kant is that the characters knowledge of the space and their relationship to time, means that eventually they will find the space they are inhabiting to be unreal.

<sup>48</sup> In some way this helps to explain and develop my understanding and therefore reasoning surrounding experience and memory via a Kantian observation, allows for our judgment of specific spaces and objects to be made. By the observation via neuroaesthetic research this does become more visible when the connection between specific neurological functions happen through the act of viewing.

<sup>49</sup> Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, trans, J.H. Bernard, (The Online Library of Liberty, A Project Of Liberty Fund, Inc. generated September, 2011), <http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/1217>, (accessed June 9, 2012), 39.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.



This judgment has constructs depending on whether the judgment is either determinate or reflective.<sup>51</sup> The determinant judgment is later on described as a law that is universally understood, one that does not require any prior to the understanding of the universal.<sup>52</sup> These determinate judgments are experiences or laws that are universally accepted or followed by everyone or everything. One such conjunction would be the understanding of gravity in the sense that there is a universal understanding of gravity and its effect on us in relation to the earth, not relating to gravity as a force, but the understanding that one will fall towards the ground. It is through such an expectation that Kant states that the law of nature—nature requires specific laws to function—are still in existence even though we do not understand its virtue or principle.<sup>53</sup> A reflective judgment relies on a form of relationship between nature and the universal, one that attempts to create a higher arch amongst its empirical principles.<sup>54</sup> The reflective judgment is bound by its laws to assert from and onto it self, due to the fact that any outside interaction would make it a determinant judgment, at the same time being unable to prescribe it towards nature.<sup>55</sup>

The understanding of natural laws or the universal law of nature is something that Kant argues is understood by us through our interpretation and observation of nature. This does not mean that our understanding of nature is a reflection of the natural laws that are in place to govern the construct of nature. The laws that are observed or experienced are based on the knowledge that we are observing nature and therefore are experiencing specific faculties/properties of nature. Even though one might not understand the laws, in Kant's view the experience will still persist due to an imposed system for which the experience has occurred. I will have the experience of a reflective judgment that function to reflect onto the experience but not to determine a sort of law of the experience, thereby allowing for the

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

relationship between experience and natural laws to exist. Reflective judgment is only based around itself and cannot be projected upon nature.

Kant moves on to discuss the concept of an object, the relation between the object and its purpose within nature as a form. That purposiveness of an object is its form, thereby allowing for the judgment of things within nature to be in the observation of form, such forms must therefore follow a set empirical law; i.e. "*the purposiveness of nature in its manifoldness*."<sup>56</sup> The function or purposiveness of nature for Kant is to function as prior to the reflective judgment. His notion is based around the idea that we are only capable of making a reflective judgment onto nature from the experiences of the phenomena that occur in nature due to its laws.<sup>57</sup> Kant sees this as a different form human activity such as art or morals.

## **2. c) The function of nature.**

So what is the function of nature or what is nature's purposiveness for Kant? Nature for Kant is something that is outside of us, something that is detained/governed/controlled by specific laws. By this assertion nature is and cannot be viewed in a similar manner to other things, such as art. However as will be provided later on, Kant does make an argument towards natural things being able to obtain a specific quality that classifies it to be art.<sup>58</sup> For the moment nature's properties are that of a mechanical construction, which are determined by its laws, and therefore when viewed upon by a person it is via a projectionist observing the mechanical workings of a machine. The viewing is always through a narrow observation.<sup>59</sup> (The existence of a mechanical construction of nature provided some evidence for Kant that there is some form of creative force behind the governing of nature, such as a God.) There is still that strong argument presented that Kant's

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>58</sup> Alexander Rueger, "Kant and the Aesthetics of Nature," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 47, No. 2, (April 2007): 138, doi:10.1093/aesthj/aylo52 (accessed June 15, 2012).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

view on the observation that if nature holds a concept of beautiful, to capture such beauty, one needs to imitate it, thereby allowing for the reasoning that art should in some form conform towards nature.<sup>60</sup> (The active participation of the Romantic period, is a subjective example though not entirely correct to make, the reason being that the Romantics did not create works of art as pure observations of nature. Due to the industrial development, the need to create emotions through nature, horror, terror, awe and exploring even concepts of the sublime.) The reason for such an observation or reasoning comes from the faculty that nature's laws are universal.

*The attainment of that design is bound up with the feeling of pleasure, and since the condition of this attainment is a representation a priori,—as here a principle for the reflective Judgement in general,—therefore the feeling of pleasure is determined by a ground a priori and valid for every man, and that merely by the reference of the Object to the cognitive faculty, the concept of purposiveness here not having the least reference to the faculty of desire. It is thus quite distinguished from all practical purposiveness of nature.*<sup>61</sup>

Kant's writings on nature have been identified to contain two parts.<sup>62</sup> The observation over things such as flowers, birds, insects etc. a relation towards beauty and the experience and observation of beauty. The other being part of the experience of the subject of the sublime these include natural occurrences such as landscape, storms and cliffs.<sup>63</sup>

## **2. d) Beauty.**

When observing objects one's interests in such an object is based on one's understanding of the objects separate properties and their functions. It is within this observation of properties that the present of beauty lays. The reference most

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 45.

<sup>62</sup> Rueger., 142.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

notably used is the rose. By observing a rose one is inclined to find it beautiful through its inherent properties. This beauty is different from the beauty that art has laid its claim towards. The beauty within the rose for Kant is a form of interaction between certain cognitive functions that causes our sensation of pleasure towards beauty. The pleasure of the experience is through a form of free play between specific faculties; our imagination and our understanding.<sup>64</sup> It is worth to mention a Kantian paradox; one that has been brought up by Alexander Rueger relating to Kant's analysis of nature and its relation to an analysis of things such as beauty of a rose.<sup>65</sup> The function of nature is to provide a place for where the observation and experiences of specific things do occur allowing for a judgment to be taken. Since a judgment of aesthetic properties cannot have a concept attached to it, an observation of why a rose is beautiful becomes problematic in the case that an observation of a rose still contain the concept that one is observing a rose from a position of beauty.<sup>66</sup> Though one could argue that for Kant it is not the rose that is beautiful, but its inherent property that causes the experiences of a sensation of beauty. Now for Kant the ultimate form of beauty within an object can only come from the creation from a human through a use of free imagination. It is clear that natural beauty for Kant cannot achieve a similar experience as that of man-made beauty. However this observation is based around the determination of judgment, how one sees an object and thereby judge it aesthetically. It is more possible to aesthetically appreciate a made object such as a photograph or a painting of something natural or within our environment then if one was to observe that object in its real physical form. The function of nature is to inform and bring about the sensory experience, without such sensory experience, one would not be able to experience anything. To bring about a more free form of thought that can be extrapolated towards the making of some form of artistic practice.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

The problem with Kant's theory surrounding beauty is observed by critiques such as Rueger in his article *Kant and the Aesthetics of Nature*.<sup>67</sup> He points out that the use of the universal, as a faculty of judgment does not work. The problem lies within the assumption of things being beautiful. One is observing a flower and can still find its properties beautiful even though one does not understand its concepts and vice versa.<sup>68</sup> The conclusion drawn is that one finds the rose beautiful not due to some universal ideal but through a subjective perspective.<sup>69</sup> Similar to Carlson's view that one can only appreciate nature through a knowledge-based assessment the individual is not considered but rather the universal ideal/experience is drawn. Kant in a way attempts to bring about a solution towards this problem by introducing two forms of beauty, one being pure, and the other impure. Pure judgment is based on our pleasure of the experience rather than the concepts; while the impure judgment is based around the combination of knowledge/concepts with the experience of pleasure.<sup>70</sup> The impure judgment acts a form of distraction from the observation, we observe natural things working in a specific way, and the judgment made is therefore based around this specific premise. The rose is beautiful because of its functional reproductive system, and strong colours to attract birds and bees. This problem is set forth in other situations such as the placement of objects within specific circumstances and the use of alterations to specific things, one example would be the addition of tattoos to the human body to create a more beautiful body.<sup>71</sup>

So where does this leave us when observing things in relation to beauty within nature compared to the observation of beauty within specific things such as art. In a Kantian ideal the observation of nature is and will always be less valid as beautiful, due to the reasoning that man-made objects through their inherent properties of being made up by our imagination. However, though nature's function seems to be

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 143-147.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 147.

to create a faculty by which we can experience beauty for the purpose of creating beauty, man-made objects are entangled within the constraints that they are created for the purposiveness to create the experience of beauty. Whiles nature though stated to have a purposiveness of universal beauty, created for us to experience beauty, it is done so through an initial idea of freedom. This freedom, the free natural environment without human intervention function as a place that is outside us, a place that has no relation to our own creation and therefore holds an universal beauty.<sup>72</sup>

I will come back to beauty later with a stronger focus on art. Whiles for Kant beauty is a reliant of nature the more observable idea of beauty has a relationship with knowledge and how such knowledge can become improved, rather than we can become something better via beauty. Again this is however an older version of the understanding of beauty.

## **2. e) Sublime.**

The sublime is similar to beauty in that it is an emotional state or a form of property within nature. Both are based within a judgment made by reflection with a satisfaction that stands by itself and are not similar or affected by sensation or hold a determinate concept.<sup>73</sup> The simplistic differences between the beautiful and the sublime lies within the form; objects that have a form within a boundary is seen to be beautiful, whiles the sublime is formless, one that Kant states is present within our thoughts in its totality.<sup>74</sup> For Kant the distinctive differences between the beautiful and sublime is within the impact each experience exert onto the person. The beautiful has a function towards the imagination as stated before. This has an effect that is supposed to apply a furthering of a persons understanding of life or experiences of life, a function that can be studied, allowing for oneself to become engaged within enlightenment. The sublime on the other hand is a type of

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.,155.

<sup>73</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 97.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

experience relating to something that is almost indescribable, placed within a specific context often relating to the power of nature.<sup>75</sup> Kant views these experiences as a form of emotional interaction, one that still has a role within the play of imagination. The sublime therefore act as a force upon the person in a way that for Kant provides a form of admiration/respect for the sublime experience. The notion that one can be attracted and repulsed by the sublime at the same time causes the experience to be more about the persons respect or admiration of the cause. This form of experience is seen as being one of a negative nature, a form of negative pleasure.<sup>76</sup>

In a relation to art—the sublime is limited due to its relation to nature and mostly being a construct of natural occurrences—the creation of art is based around concept and imagination that develops from nature. The sublimity of art, or the sublime within an art object will therefore be bound by a set of limitations within nature. This is due to Kant's mentioning that art has a function of becoming a form of aesthetic pleasure. If the objects inherent property is that of being pleasurable it cannot sustain the same sublimity as that of nature due to natures free property. Whiles the natural beauty as experienced in its form of purposiveness towards our determined judgment, and our understanding. It does therefore allow an experience of excitement within the person without their understanding of the situation, i.e. the natural effect.<sup>77</sup> The differences between the artistic sublime and the natural sublime are as followed. A person can understand the purposiveness of an artwork in so far to produce pleasure; whiles an understanding of the physical presence of nature might be limited, therefore the experience one has is that of the sublime. Though this argument should be understood within its historical context. Within today's Western oriented society one can argue that the experiences of the sublime would in so far be visible within the arts. If one would observe Kantian thought, then it should not be possible.

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

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One example given by Kant as something which does not touch on the sublime but can be thought of as being sublime, would be the wind acting upon the sea.

*Thus the wide ocean, agitated by the storm, cannot be called sublime. Its aspect is horrible; and the mind must be already filled with manifold Ideas if it is to be determined by such an intuition to a feeling itself sublime, as it is incited to abandon sensibility and to busy itself with Ideas that involve higher purposiveness.*<sup>78</sup>

For the sublime to function there cannot be any state of purposiveness within the experience. Purposiveness being the function of something, the wind blowing on the sea has a function or a form of purposiveness even though at the time of Kant's writing, the mechanical/scientific reasoning why wind exist or how it is created was know, a person of the time could understand the wind action on the sea. The idea of wind blowing on water therefore is one that does serve a function. The moving of ships!<sup>79</sup> Even though the experience of a stormy sea can be from someone assumed to be sublime, the experiences are still just one of emotions. *I am scared*, not due to the sublime experience but due to the storm might cause the ship to sink and therefore *I might die*. Whiles the understanding that the ships movement is related to the wind will therefore remove the experience of the sublime. The sublime rest within nature's most unreachable, wildest and abstract elements. One that aims to be more than what is observed or experienced, the sheer scale of natural occurrences/objects.<sup>80</sup> In so far as understanding the construction of the sublime, there are few examples given by Kant whether it is possible to create a determinate scale of the experience. Most of these are referring towards the experience of religious practices or interoperation. The highest form of sublime experiences is

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> The ships referring to are sailing ships. Though motor drive ships are affect by stormy seas as well.

<sup>80</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 97.



based around the idea of the voice of God rather than the visible representation of God, within the use of a sense based adaptation of the sublime.<sup>81</sup> Without the necessitated sensory experience the highest form of sublime experience is argued to be within the relationship of moral identity and our religious engagement.<sup>82</sup> Kant makes this connection more visible within the essay *What is Enlightenment*, by bringing forward the argument surrounding religious engagement and moral identity.

## **2. f) Does the sublime play a role or function.**

Kant's theories surrounding the sublime, what function does the theory of such thing hold towards the modern world and art? Do these writings have an impact onto what one is observing and the theories that have been contextualised around art within the last century? To begin to tackle this, an observation over the sublime will be taken. In the sense that the interpretation of the sublime is one that is recognised such as to function within a philosophical context and not just as statement proposed by Kant.

Jane Forsey points out one of the predominant arguments laid out by Guy Sircello why the sublime is not possible.<sup>83</sup> The focus lays on the claim surrounding epistemological and ontological ideas. The relationships between these two positions are in Sircello's view unarticulated by Kant<sup>84</sup> and therefore the sublime cannot function. The first part is based around the epistemological problem of the sublime. For Sircello the problem is that the sublime is not accessible with the use of

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<sup>81</sup> James Rasmussen, "Language and the Most Sublime in Kant's Third Critique," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 68:2 (May 3, 2010): 162, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1540-6245.2010.01400.x/asset/j.1540-6245.2010.01400.x.pdf?v=1&t=hgpd01y3&s=0f666a95ae741b3d801c4a8cfdc8cdee9ba501> (accessed June 18, 2012).

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>83</sup> Jane Forsey, "Is a Theory of the Sublime Possible?" *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* Vol. 65, No.4 (Autumn 2007): 381, <http://trans-techresearch.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/2007-Forsey.pdf> (accessed June 18, 2012).

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

epistemological observation. Forsey points out that Sircello's reading of the sublime is that of an experience of an object. The experience is not defined therefore it can be questioned whether or not it might be real.<sup>85</sup> If the sublime is categorised as being something that cannot be determined, or while it is realised, it affectively makes us aware towards what we are not observing, or the realisation of something other than what is real to us.

The second problem is based on the ontological observation that if the sublime does exist it must have a place that is above that of humans, while at the same time incorporate properties in the same physical sphere that a person can engage with. The sublime in some sense need to be some form of an object, which exist as an experience simultaneously holding no physical properties that are consistent with the appearance of such an object. The property of the sublime is multifunctional.<sup>86</sup> If we observe that the notion of the sublime is specific things within a specific context, once written or talked about, this sublime will no longer exist over such objects. The description of mountains and rocks is one example. Though they can be sublime and one cannot understand their nature, eventually a person will through observation gain some form of understanding creating a familiarity with the experience the person is having and therefore the objects are being observed, removing the experience of the sublime. The sublime becomes something that is observed, as being sublime yet at the same time is instantly familiar to our own viewing.<sup>87</sup> Though this is similar to the example of something that was not sublime by Kant himself, the ocean and the storm. The knowledge of the function of wind was argued to point out that this is not a sublime experience, since once we observe an event or the idea of a sublime experience it becomes part of our knowledge. That experience can no longer be sublime in that it has become familiar to us.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

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The existence of an invisible object as a conception of sublime interaction; how can we experience the sublime when the experience is based on something that cannot be perceived? The answers to the question can be observed within the treatment of the sublime as something that is unphysical. One of the most sublime experiences one can have as argued by James Rasmussen in his article *Language and the Most Sublime in Kant's Third Critique*, is that of sound.<sup>88</sup> When observing sound it is often seen as being something that holds a non-physical property in the sense that it can not be touched, one can experience the feeling of sound due to the property of sound waves traveling through the air, being the vibration of particles. In both cases the physical experience of sound and the non-physical experience of sound can be used to hold some form of validation. As such the experience of the sublime should therefore be related to an experience of the physical presence of sound. Within a contemporary context the sublimines function as an unphysical entity that lays within the physicality of sound. It is still invisible but still present as a physical entity. Even though a person might be deaf, the presences of a sound wave will still be felt. This does not however cover the epistemological problem mentioned by Sircello in the sense that one does not have the ability to convey the experience either way, since the sublime experience one is having, needs to be unrelated to our surrounding (*physical*) world.

In this case how can the sublime still be a valid form of argument regarding a contemporary context, is it still possible to create a sublime experience? Under a Kantian proposition a sublime experience struggle to function, though it is most likely possible to apply an example of a sublime experience to specific events through a less dominating view. In so far that the experiences is something that one can describe but at the time of the event it is something that is indescribable to some extend. To provide an example for something that in my mind can be described as being near a sublime experience, one can observe *Two Girls One Cup*. (This is a video on the Internet, famous for its content, two women eating each other's faeces and

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<sup>88</sup> James., 162.

vomiting, and recorded observation by people who have had no knowledge of the video.) When a person has their initial experiences through the observation of the video without any prior knowledge, will create an experience that will not be completely different from that of a person who have knowledge of the video but has not seen it. In the case where a person who is experience the video without any knowledge of it; in some ways the experience such a person is having can be acknowledge to be a form of a sublime experience, however this is not completely justifiable nor can it ever be demonstrated to hold true. The sublime as such, is just a concept of observation to describe things that are somewhat new or something that we believe has some property that should be elevated without the ability to do so with the proper words. The experience of the sublime as such is a choice by each individual.

## **2. g) My relation to the overview of Kantian aesthetic in relation to nature and space.**

Why is it important to cover Kantian thought in such an in-depth way? To begin the observation of space and nature does cover some fundamentals proposed by Kant. Since these are vital in my mind for when the observation of Kantian theory surrounding art occurs. Without an understanding of the fundamental observation, my observation of art and our experience of it becomes difficult to justify. Space and nature act together when we are engaging in the activity of observation, what Kant is providing for me was a more fundamental approach to the topic. We need to understand why we observe specific scenery via a specific way (Carlson), but the fundamental act of seeing or experience can be observed within Kant's writing. Now there are plenty of other philosophical positions to take. In this case Kant provides a vital link with Carlson and the observation of artistic theory and aesthetic theory later on.

Referring back to my placement of failing to understand art, it has a base in these relationships—space, our interpretation of such space, environment and nature and our relationship with these formalities; and the development between the removal

from environment and spaces, thereby creating a distancing between observation and experience—though the failure is just in my mind a dualistic interaction. I will hence bring forth an issue that I have encountered when observing artistic works using Carlson and Kant as a contextualisation of viewing. The example I will provide is an observation between two artists and works that are similar in a somewhat philosophical understanding or placement onto the work. For these works to function one needs to have a more in-depth understanding of Kantian thought to be able to gain something from them. However my conclusion on one of the work slightly differs from this.

### **3. The use and observation of the environment in relation to created artworks, a look at Casper David Friedrich's work *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* in relations to two contemporary artists.**

#### **3. a) Observation of two artists.**

Casper David Friedrich observation of Kantian theory relating to the sublime within his painting *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer* (*Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*)<sup>89</sup>, has been repeatedly used by many, within today's artistic and cultural field to convey specific messages; either to bring about the relationship between humanity and nature, or to elevate specific emotions, or just due to its inherent aesthetic property of the constructed image. Movie posters (such as *Battle: Los Angeles*, *Star Trek into Darkness*, *After Earth*, *The Raid Redemption*, *Inception* etc.) use a similar constructed placement of a character in relation to their surrounding environment; *Wolves in the Throne Room* used the painting as inspiration for one of their albums. In relation to the picture the best characteristic to view is in relation to other artist who have used a similar construction to create images that have a specific observation or idea. The artists observed will be Elina Brotherus and Janna Holmstedt.

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<sup>89</sup> Casper David Friedrich, *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*, 1818, Oil on Canvas, 98.4x74.8cm, Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg.

**Elina Brotherus:** *Artists and her Model series.*

Brotherus' series where the landscape acts as an incorporator of the subject; there is a relation between viewing a subject within a landscape and the placement of such figure. There is a close link within some of these photographs and the treatment of the subject matter to that of Friedrich. Unlike Friedrich where the figure is a representation of the sublime experience through the viewing of the landscape in relation to us, Brotherus photographs aims to promote the landscape as an encapsulation of the human within the landscape. The focus of the pictures is based around the subject, and the models placement, attitude, etc. towards this placement. Most of the pictures have a very specific look and feel to them that follows a melancholic mood, set by the artist herself, being encapsulated within the space and forcing the viewer to engage within this space.

Unlike Friedrich's painting, Brotherus' series creates a sense of vulnerability, her images are constructed to force the experience of viewing not as an overwhelming forthcoming danger or conquest of nature; but to demonstrate a viewing of nature or space that she is inhabiting creating a image that deals with the issue of viewing nature and us (humans) displacement from nature. As the viewer we are confronted with viewing Brotherus within this space as a vulnerable entity, at the same time we are faced with viewing her naked body. Creating a sense of danger when engaging in the observation of her work. There is a danger of observing a naked person within a landscape as a form of voyeurism. We cannot stare at the image created by Brotherus for too long, while there would be a need or requirement almost a form of expectant to stare for a longer period on *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* to truly understand the paintings message. Brotherus by creating a form of futility within the images, by placing herself naked within them, resulting in that the dangerous element is projected towards the viewer.

**Janna Holmstedt:** *The Construction Of Landscapes.*

Holmstedt use the figure present within Friedrich's painting, as a printed image, placed within a specific landscape to give that landscape a form of context in relation of the medium used, colour photography. Rather than painting the place or the chosen landscape, the placement of the figure adds to the context or artistic historical context. If one was to remove the image of the figure, the photograph becomes a space that can be anywhere, which in some form it is. The figure and title of the work gives the reasoning behind picking the specific site. Being an old dumping site from Soviet times in Estonia turned into a park is partially irrelevant; there are many countries, which have converted dumping sites into lakes or other forms of community/wild growing environments. These places can still hold a history even though it is not presented/visible. My observation of Holmstedt's reasoning for using the image by Friedrich, rest with the relationship between our understanding of nature and cultural usage. In my opinion the work is neither an observation of nature or the relationship between nature and us or constructed forms of natural places; therefore the use of the figure from Friedrich painting places a direct connection with an observation of the sublime within nature. The park/dumping site is not a sublime formulation of nature, nor are the image created and taken sublime or interesting, but rather dull. Holmstedt's intention to connect art history with the viewing of a space is faulty with the use or placement of the image and demonstrates that she either wants the viewer of the work to see a sublime element within the image, or make the dumping site to be a sublime place. By doing this Holmstedt is raising the issue that we should gain more respect for these types of forgotten places and become more aware of such sites existence. This however is not the case due to the description and additional text to the work provided by Holmstedt.

Holmstedt's work is a good example were the placement of a specific well-know piece of artwork is placed in relation to a context to validate the idea or image taken. In the context of viewing, the addition of the figure projects the notion that one should not be viewing the image as an image but place oneself within the landscape as an active viewer. The photograph's function is to create a resemblance of the

actual landscape, whiles Friedrich's painting is an idealised version of a landscape. Both in this case become interwoven. I am meant to observe the landscape within Holmstedt picture as a sublime landscape, something beautiful, untouched, but this landscape is neither. It is a falsely created place leftover from a period in history with possible questionable environmental practice. The relationship between the landscape and the viewing of the landscape is disrupted by the figure removing my need or desire to interact and explore the created artwork more. In the end we can see how Holmstedt is attempting to create this link between experience of an environment and the changing state of such an environment, i.e. turning a dumping place into a place for social gathering. However since this is the space, she is observing, and the space is man-made; and if we take on the opinion that man-made environments are judged and observed more harshly than natural ones, the link becomes lost. I will concede that my reading of the work most likely does not present the idea that Holmstedt is going for, since the work is intending to raise the issue of space and how such spaces are either ignored or changed after time. That even a dumping ground for garbage, can eventually become something that is beautiful and functional, the problem therefore of the work lays within the usage of contextualisation rather than the outcome of observation. In the end we will view these things different because of a growing and better understanding of the impact we have on the environment.

### **3. b) Comparison.**

Both works are within the medium of photography using a source material from the context of art historical placement and the medium of painting. The source material for Brotherus is more linked with the image relation and structure, whiles Holmstedt takes Friedrich image as a direct interaction. Presenting an observable usage of the information and knowledge of the painting *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* will affect the reading of each of the artist's works. Holmstedt rely on that the viewer has knowledge of Friedrich painting to bring forth the idea within the work. If this knowledge does not exist the question why the person is within the painting becomes a part of the experience. I cannot fully understand Holmstedt's work



without some knowledge of an art historical context and philosophical understanding to the referenced work without reading added text, if provided by Holmstedt. Brotherus' images on the other hand replicates and structures themselves around the *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*. In this context a person does not need to have an understanding of the works placement or usage of the constructed image. I can see within the photographs what Brotherus is attempting to achieve, the emotions I will feel will be related to her work and not to my knowledge of art history, philosophical theory etc. however such knowledge does added to give me something more to divulge into when observing the artworks; giving me a more complex structure to them then just an aesthetically pleasing image. The different approaches taken by each individual artist are examples of how current practice may present themselves within artistic works, one demanding knowledge and research before pursuing the work, whiles the other is relating to the viewers internal ability to conform towards mostly an aesthetic experience.

In both examples the need to have some form of understanding of Kantian thought will undoubtedly bring about a more in-depth feeling. I find Holmstedt's work much less interesting due to my observation of Kantian ideas as well as knowledge of Carlson's discussion. It is through my knowledge of these ideas that makes the work of Holmstedt fall flat or seem less interesting. This is one reason why I will find works that are more aesthetically driven more preferable such as Brotherus' photographs. In an idealised world I should not have this form of problem, the distinction between the works should not be so great. The reason for observing two very different artists that hold a theoretically appointed similarity, is to demonstrate how even though I am cable of understanding the works, my experience of them differs due to my gathered background knowledge. The difference between an opinions made on such a work is still affected, by the viewers taste.

Often this appearance of taste has a direct influence on my artistic work and here lays the problem. If I am reliant that my own enjoyment of artworks is based on my taste, people who are observing my work will have a similar reaction. The viewer

will experience the work via their taste. The creation of artworks that in some sense do hold a stylistic similarity—this is something that is visible within my own paintings, due to skill, colour use and brushstrokes—then the viewer will either dismiss the works and see them as aesthetic objects, or paintings, or a series of paintings within a specific style that formulates an unclear subject matter. Some times when confronted with such works whereby the viewer has too much background knowledge, the experience of viewing is derived from this body of knowledge. The viewer will find a form of displeasure in the experience of viewing the artwork if execution of such work is done poorly or if the artist has misinterpreted the source material. It is displeasure of not the actual work in an aesthetic way but displeasure acting out as an almost internal dialogue towards the justification of the work made by the artists. We can argue or view this sort of internal dialogue as a good outcome. Sometimes this is the case, however other times the internal dialogue hinders the enjoyment of the work and as such the availability to gain anything from the work. This does lead me onto raise an observation onto interpretation and observation, and a more direct approach towards artistic observation and art. On some level I have chosen to follow my understanding on this subject matter by taking on a position where my output of information about my work is very limited. I know that such an act cause problem that the works are just objects with a specific aesthetic structure, no different from any other object in ones surrounding.

### **3. c) Comparison/concluding of space and environment.**

This observation demonstrates that we are dependent on viewing and judging not only specific objects—in this case artworks—but also our surroundings. If my understandings of specific culturally related subject matters are in relation to my knowledge and its placement within a specific situation this observation over space, environment and nature becomes important. The observation between Brotherus and Holmstedt demonstrates how my problem arises when viewing art. Now this form of viewing is not within a specific space, but the works themselves deal with the issue of things such as space, environment and placement within the

environment. I am capable to formulate an understanding of both works, as such my experience should be the same, however since my conclusion and observation of the works clearly show more preference towards Brotherus over Holmstedt. I can formulate a conclusion that in my mind demonstrates a problem when viewing and experiencing art, via the relationship with my own knowledge and understanding of the cultural world in relation to the observable works in question.

# **Experiences: through knowledge, observation and interpretation.**

## **1. Knowledge, observation and interpretation.**

An experience is often dependent on some form of background knowledge or understanding. Now when we are observing artworks and are experience such artworks, we use this background knowledge to make a specific judgement that determines if we like or dislike the work etc. An example can be seen when observing the relationship between Greenberg and his use of Kantian theory; the belief that Greenberg misappropriate Kantian theory. A lot of experience and understanding is in relation to our knowledge gained through our lives, as such we will always make a judgment or project a specific opinion based on these past experiences. Therefore to have any relation to what we are viewing and experience becomes a problem when this relationship is determined by specific motives, i.e. we are looking to find something within the experience to satisfy our own need or agenda towards specific believes.

If we consider the impact when observing an artwork there are always some elements that will confront the viewer. These elements cannot be fully controlled by the author/artist of the work and as such the works intention will change depending on a viewer's reading of a work. Artist can always explain through text, semiotic constructions or verbal language the intended point, but as explained or rather pointed out by Paul Ricoeur the interpretations cannot be controlled. Ricoeurs argument states that the interpretation of text is changed when a person is reading the text. This is due to the change in text autonomy, from being one that is a collection of thoughts by the author to an interpretive reading by the bibliophile.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> J. Gary Knowles and Ardra L. Cole, "20 Painting as Research: Create and Critique," *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*, Sage Research Methods (2008): 12, doi:10.4135/9781452226545 (accessed June8, 2012).

One example is when the author Ian McEwan is relating to his sons education. His son was writing an essay (for his A-levels) based on one of McEwan's books. McEwan had helped his son to write the essay by giving his son his intention of the book. McEwan's son was given a low mark due to the teachers disagreement with what McEwan had intended the work to say.<sup>91</sup> This point confirms Ricoeurs notion, even though the author's intentions where to portray something within the novel, the interpretation was change through the autonomy of the text.

Danto expands on Ricoeurs argument, by stating that as a new interpretation is made the artwork viewed is transformed creating a new piece of work.<sup>92</sup> Using the example of McEwan, the text's meaning changes by the teacher's own observation, two interpretations constituting to two different forms of artworks. This is an obvious reasoning to make within specific forms of art practice; most notably within abstract paintings, some poetry, etc. where the interpretations of the works are very open. Danto does explain that the argument has its limits, based around the limitation of knowledge.<sup>93</sup>

We can observe and make interpretations on paintings, which every way we choose, but the interpretations can only hold up to a certain level without the appropriate knowledge.<sup>94</sup> (Similar to how Carlson uses his argument for appreciation of nature and knowledge of nature.) In this case my understanding of a painting and the

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<sup>91</sup> Katz, Ian, "Ian McEwan on his novels as A-level set texts: 'My son got a very low mark'- video," The Guardian (June 8, 2012): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/video/2012/apr/03/ian-mcewan-a-level-set-text-video>.

The book was *Enduring Love* and what the mad man symbolizes within the novel. Ian argues he was a mad man, while the teacher saw this person as a moral authoritarian figure.

<sup>92</sup> Knowles and Cole., 12.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

This is the most likely reason why there are so many bad paintings in the world, and so many amateur painters, who focuses on making specific forms of abstract paintings.

experience of that painting is dependent on my knowledge of specific things. The initial experience of the painting is always going to be based on an aesthetic experience, but the judgment and understanding of the painting, to reflect on the experience is based on my knowledge.

Why is this an important point to make. Using McEwan as an example again, it is through the knowledge of the teacher, which allowed for the interpretation of the work to be different from that which McEwan's original idea was based upon. The teacher's interpretation holds a more authoritarian position over McEwan's son. The understanding made by the teacher was in relation to his/her knowledge of literature, and this knowledge was placed onto McEwan's book. So when McEwan's son used the reasoning for specific topics within the book the teacher saw this as a misunderstanding of the written work.<sup>95</sup> This example is to provide the backing for the argument place forwards by Ricoeurs and Danto, that knowledge can have an effect on the observation and interpretation of a work. The interpretive authority over an artwork does not exclusively lay with the author/artist of the created work, but rather within the specific heritable structures of the cultural landscape. These people hold and make the interoperation of specific works and thereby allow for their understanding to become actively osmotised down into the public. My understanding of art is not through my own intrinsic understanding but an understanding through knowledge created by others; setting a starting point between observation, research and the link between whose apparent positions it is to make the decision between discussions and interpretations of artworks.<sup>96</sup>

We as an audience can make interpretations of for example Pablo Picassos' *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, make up meanings and discuss theories. The outcome can represent several different views, therefore resulting in almost different artworks.

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<sup>95</sup> To make one thing clear, McEwan is not meant to be placed in the light of a non-intellectual within the literary world, nor does the teacher have more authority over McEwan.

<sup>96</sup> Knowles and Cole., 11.

One would expect the views or interpretations to be similar amongst a similar collective group. If we though observe the collective opinions by Picassos' friends once he finished the painting, the collective or interpretation of the work will be different. Arguably we have hindsight and art historical knowledge. Picassos' friends did not share the same knowledge at its creation similar to what McEwans' son experienced. The knowledge of McEwans' son of the work was closer to the original source than the teacher, however the teacher had a wider range of knowledge of the literature world then McEwans' son. I will bring forth that this is and will create some form of problem when relating knowledge and observation with the experience and interpretation of an artistic work. The following aspects will be discussed:

1. When art is observed and experienced through a set of based knowledge.
2. When the placement of the artistic object is accepted as a norm.

Starting with point one. Even though one has some form of training or experience within the world of art it will be difficult to achieve a correct interpretation or an interpretation that reflects the intention of the artist. If a person has spent a lot of time trained as a painter or uses traditional means of creating art, their perception of many contemporary art works will be seen as un-artistic, the value will be predetermined and therefore the interpretation will be different. The knowledge of art for the traditionalist might be vast, but since it is set within a perimeter of traditional values, their understanding is limited. This goes both ways. Furthering the example of knowledge and its link with interpretation/perception the artists David Hockney can be used as an example.

Within the text *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples*, Hockney's Polaroid collages and photocopy-paintings are presented to provided an example between observation and interpretation in

relation to placement or rather technological understanding.<sup>97</sup> Here the works (referring specially to the photocopies) were first seen as mere copies, later on a theoretical and conceptual idea were place upon them.<sup>98</sup> The photocopy paintings are made up of colour photocopies that are printed and printed over and over again to build up layers, until a final print is made, the layers did not use any pre-existing image and relied on Hockney's usage of the machine to act as a tool to create a painting.<sup>99</sup> What is pointed out is that the works made predates known editing-programs such as Photoshop.<sup>100</sup> The knowledge today that one can recreate such works using editing programs fairly easily on a computer has developed the works structure. A viewer can now be invited into the process of the making of the work whiles being unable to render its initial meaning or intentions. Similar was the case for the Polaroid series of collaged photographs. The knowledge that one can re-create the works with the use of computer programs has created an interpretation that is removed from Hockney's original intention. Some will see these as specific photo-collage, what's in front of them as a mere decorative idea. *"I can do that at home and it would look nice on my wall"*. Others see the works as the interaction between the use of photography and painting, the distorted perspective combined with a removal of the intrinsic function of a photograph and some would see them as works of cubist inspired painting. These different interpretations are created by each individuals knowledge but also the positioning and placements of the works. This will lead onto the second point.

The placement of artistic works within a specific situation will create a particular reading of that work. A good example is the white wall gallery space and viewing of paintings. This notion is very heavily ingrained in most people no matter what their social situation is in the Western world, i.e. people that have had some contact with art on a general level. A persons knowledge base around viewing paintings in gallery

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<sup>97</sup> Knowles and Cole., 13.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.



will see a painting differently if it was not displayed on the white wall. In the case the painting is placed leaning against the wall or on the floor, the assumption or interpretation based around the knowledge of the viewer will be that the artist is intending to make a statement. In most case this might be true but the interpretation is no longer that this is a painting, but more of an installation, object, or sculpture. Another example can be that of a sculptural object. In most cases when displaying sculpture the object or three-dimensional thing is shown, we do not display a photograph of the sculpture and define the photograph as a sculpture.<sup>101</sup> We can all agree with such a reasoning fairly easily. Though there is a problem that can be seen when the observation is done via a computer screen, which is located in a space that does not conform towards a known art space. In this case the observing an artwork as a picture on a computer screen, one will acknowledge that the observation is of the specific medium the work was created in. So if I am observing a painting on the computer screen, the acknowledgement that it is a painting will happen rather than an image on a screen. So therefore the observation of an image and as such our understanding of such image is depended on the situation it is viewed. When I am observing an image within a gallery space, the medium by which such image is produced upon will defined its characteristic, i.e. a photograph is defined as a photograph in a gallery space, whiles on a computer screen if such photograph is of a sculpture or artwork, then it becomes a 2D copy of such work. There are examples where the use of 2D screens or image production methods mainly referring to Hockney, whereby the outcome of the created image is called things such as paintings, though the property of the work does not contain a classical idea of painting being that of pigment on canvas. In this case I am referring to his photocopier works, and more recently his paintings done using the Ipad, then printed out on a large scale.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

Referring to Hockney and his opinion on what function photography has, the means of being useful for capturing 2D images and not 3D forms or spaces; moving on to how people mostly see art today, not in its original form but as photographs or on a screen.

Therefore when observing therefore artworks via things such as a screen or a printed photograph the observation undertaken is still a restrictive one, one that only shows what the viewer is intending to see. As such the above argument surrounding the placement of artworks exists if and only if the works are within a specific context. However the argument cannot sustain itself fully due to:

1. The argument is based on an assumption that people makes specific judgment and interpretations.
2. An assumption on specific knowledge of the people observing (based on a western perspective) and their specific knowledge of art works and technology.
3. Attempting to create a link between interpretation, aesthetic properties and knowledge to formulate an argument.

Why is there a problem with the above discussion, when firstly the multi-interpretation of works is positive? Well the problem is that in most cases, the interpretations of the works are based on the limited spectrum of knowledge. The observation of Hockney's collages, even though there are multiple interpretations of the work, the limitation of knowledge behind the work is less. Even though I have no understanding of art history, I can still understand Hockney's Polaroid pictures because I have knowledge of how to take such a pictures or recreate such a structure within my computer. If we hence observe one of Danto's pointes surrounding how knowledge and the amount of knowledge will have an effect on the viewers experience and the creation of such an experience. Knowledge is not specifically defined—people share different forms of knowledge—creating a parallax the interpretations of works can be wide and very different. But if a viewer does not share the right knowledge surrounding the specific work the outcome of the viewing of such work will have some effect on the experience of the work; creating a negative experience, that may have a negative effect on the observation of the work later on by peers within a similar situation. This does not relate to works that come with pre-required research or readings needed for the understanding of

the work. In these cases the pre-readings and research is part of the works, and the knowledge of the observer will be based surrounding these prerequisite. As such there will be an interpretation but not in the same way and therefore we can argue that all artworks require some form of prerequisite.

How do we deal with the created problem and do artists have to deal with the problem of observation and interpretation of their works. Yes and no, depending on the intention of the work and its purpose as art. By affirming that an artist is intending to make a statement via their artistic work, such works construction should be considered, thing such as aesthetics, medium/mediums function etc. On the other hand if the works intention is to be left open these sorts of consideration are less likely to be taken into account. In this case the outcome of viewing is not about transforming an idea or statement but rather leave the viewer to acknowledge or interpret. In both cases however, the outcome of viewing and experience of the works, will have a judgment place onto them based around the viewer's background knowledge and experience

Can a person without a high knowledge of artistic practice truly enjoy artistic works, or is the experience they are having a matter of aesthetic gratification no matter what the subject matter is. If the artwork has a very distinctive and visible property, such as informing the public about something bad or constructing an idea in the most simplistic way, then the experience of observing the art can be understood but more in a manner of factual understanding and knowledge. Similar to the knowledge people gets from news broadcasts, newspapers or textbooks. If this is the case then is there a real reason for artworks that eludes the viewer to formulate self-interpretations; the works created are mere objects with a message, which is stronger then the viewers intake of their surrounding, and will bring this message through as something factual and important.

So by looking back at the presented argument we can observe that.

1. The link between observation and understanding is part of our knowledge and how that knowledge is applied.
2. The interpretation of art works are linked to our knowledge.
3. Observation and interpretation are two separate faculties that use our collective knowledge.

## **2. Functionality and the link with interpretation.**

Functionality is in itself a problematic part of the experience of viewing. With interpretation comes the function and vice versa. Within the book *Functional Beauty*, an example on why function can be problematic is presented.<sup>102</sup> Glenn Parsons & Allen Carlson lay out the discussion relating to the structure and placement of an Opera house.<sup>103</sup> The argument moves around the function and aesthetic judgment of the opera house. Depending on how one sees the house its function will affect our perception and aesthetic judgment; the aesthetic judgment is an overall view that incorporates interpretation. So to make things easier the use of interpretation will replace aesthetic judgment. In Parsons' and Carlson's argument, they point out that an urban architect will observe the opera house in a different manner from that of an opera lover.<sup>104</sup> Now unlike an artwork both will observe the opera house and as such they should and will experience the building as a building. The function of the building however is different for the individual person. The music lover will have a strong concern about the acoustics within the building and not with the function of the buildings exterior or placement in relation to other buildings, which is the concern of the architect. In this case the observation and interpretation is based around a specific form of belief and knowledge, their view being placed on to the functionality of the building. Unlike art, buildings are more recognised by people as places of human interaction and safety. People live or spent

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<sup>102</sup> Glenn Parsons and Allen Carlson, *Functional Beauty*, Oxford University Press, UK, 2008, 49.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 50-52.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 50-52.

most of their lives within buildings in the western world. Due to the fact that most people observe some form of buildings every day, the universal interpretation will be the same. They might not agree on the aesthetic and functionality of the building. But they will agree that a building is a building. Unlike art, where an universal agreement of what art is will differ. Referring back to the previously laid out argument on interpretation, the interpretation of an artwork through observation is determined by knowledge. This allows for a function for that artwork to be made, thereby making a judgment of the work.

An example could be: Observing a painting on the ground.

The knowledge of that paintings hang on the wall, and not placed on the ground, makes the viewer interpret the work not as a painting or a picture but as an object within a context of installation/sculptor. From this the viewer can draw a conclusion/judgment: a) they like the work; b) they considerer the work of art either bad art or not art.

In the end there will always be a limitation to or an interpretations of things due to the major lack of knowledge by an individual. Now knowledge plays an important part in the interpretation of the work, but also, so does ones experiences of the work. When an observation and experience of an artwork occurs as seen our knowledge is in play, since this happens the outcome is that we are developing a judgment upon the work. This judgement will also be affected by the functionality of the work as for the example of the Opera house. If the function of the work is not accepted then such work can be considered to hold a poor quality or become disliked. The opera house was judged by its function and an artwork can be judge in a similar way. If I am taking part in an experimental developed artwork, then the property of function of such artwork should be considered. In some case this cannot happen. Since the artwork is a newly experimental artwork, and if lets presume, my understanding of such a work is limited due to my knowledge of art being that of a

traditionalist approach. Then my experience of the artwork will not be based on the work but rather my own misunderstanding of what arts function is.

When the observer sees artistic works, part of the observation and experiences will affect their moral and ethical boundaries. An artwork that pushes on people's moral and ethical boundaries will be judged more harshly no matter what the artwork is attempting to project.

So how does this exemplification of problems that keep on arising from the distinctive observation on the interaction between art, objects and our surroundings? The viewing of art and therefore the definition of artistic works by us are far more complex in relation to that of objects. This has to do with how we are judging such things to be art, while when the viewing of an object the outcome and judgment of such object is based around if we understand what the object is.

## **Kant's relation to the modern, furthering an understanding between the modern contexts of misinterpretation/misunderstanding.**

This section will focus on Kant's relation to art, and what Kantian philosophy says about art. The goal is to present how Kantian philosophy still functions in relation to the viewing of art and how Kantian philosophy can play a role to describe certain aspect of contemporary artistic practice, through the relationship with Kant and theorist such as Robert Clewis, Diarmuid Costello and Bradley Murray.

What these observations provides and allows though mostly show is how the effect of viewing, this form of viewing requires a judgment to be made onto the artwork, to cover thing such as; *this is an artwork, I like it* etc. Now since the link between knowledge and judgment is so great, and therefore our experience of art is affect by such a link. When the use of artistic theory such as that of Kant in relation to ones own observation or justification the outcome can become change, this is the reason for observing the interaction between Greenberg's use of Kantian thought. Starting to explore this difference between philosophical observation and cultural/critical arts observation, I am attempting to develop the idea between art as being observed and experienced, in relation to our knowledge of the surrounding world. We can therefore bring back Carlson's ideas that are concerning with the experience of the environment, since if we are based to observe many environments via a picturesque formation; the viewing of art will be placed within a similar form of viewing, as such an argument can be proposed that the experience is not of the viewing of the individual artwork, but rather of the experience of a predetermined knowledge of how to view artworks. What is visible within Carlson's argument and will become visible in a Greenbergian observation is towards the enjoyment of an artwork, and ones understanding of such works is related to ones knowledge of the context of the viewed work. If I do not understand this context/classification then my enjoyment of the work is dependent on my aesthetic experience alone. I will proclaim that the

experience of artistic work is most often in my mind only achieved/understood/perused by those who have knowledge or need to attained knowledge of these specific works. People who explore cultural activities do it for their own needs or interest.

## 1. Greenberg and Kant.

Kantian philosophy is present in some of Clements Greenberg's discussions in his essay *Modernist Painting*. This essay was for Greenberg a way to champion formalism. He claims that Kant is the first modernist; Kant's method of self-analysis and critic is compared to the methods explored by modernist painters at the time that use self-critic within their works reflecting back on the painted surface along the act of painting. We can see this observation of modern painters by Greenberg to formulate a link towards Kantian philosophy.<sup>105</sup>

*The Enlightenment criticized from the outside, the way criticism in its accepted sense does; Modernism criticizes from the inside, through the procedures themselves of that which is being criticized. It seems natural that this new kind of criticism should have appeared first in philosophy, which is critical by definition, but as the 19<sup>th</sup> century wore on, it entered many other fields.*<sup>106</sup>

Greenberg's idea laid the foundation surrounding advancement of modernism via specific groups of painters and as such transforming Kant's theory. Kantian philosophy was transformed from theoretical philosophical thought, onto artistic creation and at the same time keeping to a traditional observation of the aesthetic practice of art. Through such means Greenberg's theory of the modern was able to develop, a critic of Greenberg's inability to move away from the aesthetic judgment

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<sup>105</sup> Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," (Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism vol. 4, ed. John O'Brian, 1993.): 1-8, <http://cas.uchicago.edu/workshops/wittgenstein/files/2007/10/Greenbergmodpa int.pdf> (accessed June 18, 2012).

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 1.



of art. The change one can observe is how contemporary critics are observing and acknowledging that criticism of works of art should be relying on our cognitive processing rather than our aesthetic processing; Robert Clewis touches on these matters within, *Kant and Aesthetic Judgments of Modernist Art*.<sup>107</sup> (When approaching this text by Clewis, some points should be made for consideration. The essay does bring about an acknowledgement of a Greenbergian thought process and the usage of Kant providing some case where Greenberg's argument works. In my opinion the observation of Clewis does confirm a misuse by Greenberg. It is important to understand that Greenberg's essay is relating to modernist art, as a way to champion formalist painters of his time in New York. The flatness so often mentioned by theorist within Édouard *Manet*, Paul Cézanne or Piet Mondrian works can also be attributed to the change in the society rather than the change in self-critic on painting; the initial critic lay within the social structure and social changes at the times and not with the stylistic changes in painting. Writers, such as Griselda Pollock,<sup>108</sup> uses a different approach to these artist and the movement, one that focuses on space, the public space, the visible space and the speciality of the paintings. This is an acting extension from people such as Timothy James Clark who attempted to deal with the Modernist painters and why the development of these paintings occurred in such a manner.)

For Clewis, cognitive criticism of modernist works is on the same level or is more prevalent than within the aesthetic observation. Clewis does state that there is a possibility to accept a critical inwardness onto the works, "*an aesthetic experience of Modernist art as reflecting on the conditions of its own production(.)*"<sup>109</sup> When a

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<sup>107</sup> Robert Clewis, "Greenberg, Kant and Aesthetic Judgments of Modernist Art," *Canadian Aesthetics Journal*, Volume 14 (Autumn 2008): 1, [http://www.uqtr.quebec.ca/AE/Vol\\_14/modernism/pdf/14\\_07\\_Clewis\\_Greenberg\\_%20Kant\\_Aesthetic\\_Judgment.pdf](http://www.uqtr.quebec.ca/AE/Vol_14/modernism/pdf/14_07_Clewis_Greenberg_%20Kant_Aesthetic_Judgment.pdf) (accessed December 19, 2012).

<sup>108</sup> Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the Histories of Art*, London and New York, Routledge, 1988, <https://www.msu.edu/course/ha/446/griseldapollock.pdf> (accessed December 19, 2012).

<sup>109</sup> Clewis., 1.

person is observing works of modernist art, the aesthetic property is present within the created artwork, therefore is observation and following judgment cannot rely on its aesthetic property alone. By no means does this statement devalue Greenberg's application towards the modern. Though it shows how the failure of using or rather purely relying on aesthetics as a form of judgment, when artworks are more demanding or require a different form of interaction, such as happenings, conceptual art and video etc. Greenberg's showed an unwillingness to accept these changes at the time. The Greenbergian aesthetics relies on the object/artwork to hold certain properties. These properties should remove the object/artwork from a relation to the artist, viewer or the world, present within some formalist paintings. Greenberg's failure to deal with the new movements of artistic practice and a noticeable attempt to create a form of Freudian/psychological understanding of art through Kant, leads to an inability to recognise the post-modern area. Due to the downplaying of the artistic theory while at the same time projecting an idea of creating works that are self-critical, the psychological approach taken by Greenberg was to establish this notion of self-criticism within the modernist and following painters.

The failings of Greenberg and his attempts on the artistic theorisation of the modern led to a reduction in the use of Kantian thought by many artistic theorists; Greenberg's misuse, laid within two positions of Kantian theory, as explained by Diarmuid Costello, distinguishing between Kant's notion of free and dependent beauty.<sup>110</sup> Costello argues that Greenberg was attempting to place the idea of free beauty onto art removing specific arguments made by Kant in relation to subject. Free beauty specificity; the experience of feeling, and related to the natural environment, rather than the aesthetic beauty relating to the arts. The attempt is

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<sup>110</sup> Diarmuid Costello, "Greenberg's Kant and the Fate of Aesthetics in Contemporary Art Theory," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 65, No.2 (Spring 2007): 221, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1540-594X.2007.00251.x/asset/j.1540-594X.2007.00251.x.pdf?v=1&t=hgpcer2n&s=dd8d90dc6484f3f38a46bce4e6f40aa94644c53d> (accessed June 19, 2012).

somewhat focusing on attaching the Kantian theory relating to formalistic judgment onto the arts, and thereby removing Kant's own writings on the arts or removing some of the fundamental ideas relating to art.<sup>111</sup> Even though Kant does write that the faculty of formalism is the basis for taste, it is not the same formal properties by which Greenberg is attempting to finalise.<sup>112</sup>

Making an aesthetic judgment of a piece of artwork from the proposed Greenbergian perspective, requires the judgment to contain specific features that embodies the right criteria to allow for a judgment to be made. With Greenberg's claim of modernist art being self-critical, the judgment made is not based solely on the formal features of the artwork, as raised by Clews.<sup>113</sup> The judgment requires the viewer to observe the work within a faculty of relation to artworks, art historical context and objects. For the judgment of the modernist art to work it requires a non-aesthetic property to be observed alongside the artwork. We cannot make a judgment on things such as colour field paintings without the knowledge of its relationship to the art historical context or other forms of paintings within the historical field. Though the judgment on the formal qualities of such works can be observed, one is therefore only making a judgement on its properties as felt through ones senses. For example an aesthetic judgment would be placed upon the colours used rather than the artwork itself. Kantian theory would see the work as an object, an object being understood through our intuition and conception, e.g. ending up as a sensory experience of red. The judgment made will undoubtedly be false as the judgment of an object or colour does not introduce play, play in this case is via a Kantian aspect of play. On the other hand, the introduction of a non-aesthetic property within the judgement, as pointed out by Clews, will bring about a cognitive

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Bradley Murray, "Kant on Genius and Art," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (April 2007): 206, doi:10.1093/aesthj/aylo56 (accessed June 21, 2012).

<sup>113</sup> Clews., 2.

content.<sup>114</sup> Thereby making it possible to create a reading by the judging party that is completely different from the artist initial intention or understanding.

These are some of the reasons why Greenberg's usage of Kantian thought does not work when applied to specific aesthetic judgments in regards to art. The reason being that in many case Kantian judgement is often viewed as being related to the beautiful, this ideal form of beauty is then project onto artistic practices. Since for Kant beauty is to incur the viewer to gain something, as well as being something that should be universal. Now it is clear that taste is often a determining factor during the observation of art and therefore in this regards beauty cannot be part of the judgment made surrounding artistic works. The property of the object is determined in relation to our taste, through intuition, understanding, etc. a judgment is made of the object is specific to a cognitive sense. The problem with this is through the interpretation of objects. Kant's view surrounding the interpretation of objects is based around intuition and concept in relation to space and time. When viewing an art object in its context of being not a work of art but an object then the *aesthetics*—in this case the aesthetics is related to beauty—cannot be sufficient enough to give a clear judgment. How does one therefore solve the problem? Most contemporary objects are viewed to be judged aesthetically, in these cases the usage of aesthetic judgement failed if it is in accordance to beauty rather than an aspect of aesthetic harmony or taste. This is why when a judgment made surrounding an artwork or onto an artwork, the judgement cannot be purely based on an understanding of beauty, or the relation to something that can be deemed aesthetically pleasing. If the observation of beauty is taken on such observation, it should be based on the attainment of becoming, that, which holds a form within a pursued property, a property that can hold a form of perfection within its own quantifiable boundaries.

Example 1: Horror film

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

The judgment of a horror film is not how beautiful it is but rather how much horror one experiences watching it. The property of perfection within a horror film is pursuing to make something that scares most people.

Purposiveness of a horror film is to scare. The judgment made therefore has its basis within the amount of scare one experiences. This is often normally done automatically; the problem is that one cannot make a judgment in a similar fashion for the general term of movies. The property of perfection within a film is indefinable, though it would be moving images. But then any film that is made up of moving images has therefore been judged as great or perfect. Though this is an extreme simplification towards Kantian philosophy and thereby the observation of Greenberg's theory, it is only to provide an example of a context by which Kant can still sit within a contemporary setting.

Example 2: Faecal matter/faeces.

With Kant's notion of beauty within his aesthetics there is a possibility for the ideal faecal matter to exist as a beautiful object by the use of our cognitive minds through a process of gathering specific information about the properties of the faecal matter, things such as thickness, smell, shape, etc. This process, if perused via a Kantian thought is via a person's intuition, and it allows for a break down of the faecal matter to exist. One should in a case be able to create a perfect or beautiful faecal matter by quantifying each property, though one could not make the statement that faeces are aesthetically beautiful, due to aesthetic judgments needing to contain a rationalisation that is related to the universal in the Kantian interpretation of beauty.

The problematic placement between Greenberg and Kant has clearly been shown. The intention by Greenberg to champion the formalist painters appearing in New York via a Kantian philosophical discourse can be seen to be futile though there is support for Greenberg's argument to be correct. There is no doubt that Greenberg has knowledge of Kant and that there is no confusion within the theories proposed

by Greenberg at the time. The futility lies within how these theories failed to react to what was happening to the transition of art at the time. Kantian though becomes disenfranchised from the artistic world due to its inability to deal with the changing times and Greenberg's own usage of Kantian philosophy.

If we move from this position and acknowledge Greenberg's misuse of Kant, then it is possible to say that for some, the observation of specific artworks—mainly those produced from the modernist onto abstract expressionism—the viewer will have gained this knowledge and understanding of the process of viewing such works. The viewer will have an experience via this form of thinking; experiencing a Rothko painting via the understanding that the painting was in a way acting up the self-criticism of painting. In the context of these texts, there can be some discussion aimed towards the validity of the claims by the critics against Greenberg.

Greenberg's argument within *Modern Painters* is aimed towards the self-critics of the painter's actions and methods, therefore any judgment made surrounding this matter is based on the specific point of view taken on by the observer's philosophical identity. I can demonstrate this by observing different paintings and their relation to flatness.

## **2. Flatness: the development of specific application of paint in relation to the viewing of paintings and how the approach of artistic creation should take on such a consideration.**

To demonstrate the difference in my opinion of what flatness is and how it can be perceived in relation to painting, flatness is an inherent property of a majority of painting but not considered to be a visible. Often the case of flatness is put in relation to the intention of the painter's subject matter. Since the development of painting, the illusion of a three dimensional space become the normative pursue for many painters and still is today. If depth or the illusion of three-dimensional space is not fulfilled by a painter the link to flatness is often made as textural/structural part of the work. In many cases this form of reasoning has

been in development from the development of modernist painters, whose intentions at the time is characterised as a turning point within the arts. The appearance of the Impressionist changed the way art was treated from that point onwards.<sup>115</sup> It is clear that the flatness became a part of painting, once the need to replicate three-dimensional space on a flat surface became redundant.

The need to create a three-dimensional space within a painting is always going to implicate a sense of reading of such work, the understanding that such space requires some sort of skill to create. The judgment on the work is reflective of such skill in relation to the viewing of the painting. Three examples can be compared of different works where the differences between flatness and three-dimensional space is relevant in the experience and viewing of the paintings.

Alex Katz: *Lincolnville, Labor Day*.<sup>116</sup>

Édouard Manet: *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère (Un bar aux Folies Bergère)*<sup>117</sup>

Rembrandt van Rijn: *The Night Watch or The Shooting Company of Frans Banning Cocq (De Nachtwacht)*.<sup>118</sup>

Within these three different works the presence of depth, created space, and flatness is visible. Therefore by comparing the works in the relation to these qualities I will attempt to show that the acknowledgement of viewing the paintings

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<sup>115</sup> The idea that some paintings are flat in relation to others comes or can be derived from a common knowledge and commutative experience through the standard textbook/survey-text of Western art history. Flatness has existed for many years within other cultures, such as in Japan, the idea of replicating the world as close as possible is only one part of painting that has been in existence, and even the story of painting is a non-linear one in the West.

<sup>116</sup> Alex Katz: *Lincolnville, Labor Day* 1992, Oil on Canvas, 290x579cm, Saatchi Gallery, London.

<sup>117</sup> Édouard Manet: *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère (Un bar aux Folies Bergère)* 1882, Oil on Canvas, 92x139cm, Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

<sup>118</sup> Rembrandt van Rijn: *The Night Watch or The Shooting Company of Frans Banning Cocq (De Nachtwacht)* 1642, Oil on Canvas, 363x437cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

from the perspective of an audience, will provide a difference in experience related to my understanding of the art historical context by which these works will be placed. For many the relationship between the viewing of the work by Rembrandt and Manet is an experience that reflects back on a certain feature of art, which for some will have disappeared and is lacking in contemporary art. Though Katz is a recognizable artist who is coming to the end of his career, his work would still be viewed as simplistic next to the other two, while at the same time holding the most visible quality of flatness.

The presence of depth, the depth within the works are created by the use of light and shadows, most notably used by Rembrandt, but also by Katz within the shadowing of the ground in the form of rocks, that brings about the experience of depth. Manet's painting in this case is slightly different as the depth is a reflection; the space that is reflected is the space that we are occupying. There is less focus on the use of shadows as an intention for creating space; the space is created with the curvature of the balcony. Space in relation to this construction is not something physical that is normally observed when viewing something. One assesses things by the changes within the light and shade; things that are evenly lit can appear flat, as can be seen in flash photography. In relation to flatness, Manet's painting looks flat because of its lack of depth while Katz painting is flat with depth added due to the use of shadowing within the painting.

Space in relation to placement of the viewer, in this case the placement or creation of spaces is directly interwoven with the position of the viewer encouraging the feeling of depth. This is not present within Katz' painting due to the inherent flatness and directly created space the figure inhabit. Katz space is a space present within the frame of the painting, one that a viewer cannot inhabit but only observe. Manet and Rembrandt has a clearly different approach towards the use of space, the paintings function to react to the viewer's physical space in two different ways but both relying on the physical space the viewer is inhabiting and the space the paintings possess.



Manet creates a space with the use of the mirror, the mirror is reflecting back the space by which we are within. We observe with the knowledge that a mirror reflects and this makes us feel the presences and our link within the space. We are not physical within the painting but can take on a characteristic of a non-physical entity within the painting or we can imagine ourselves being a person who is within the space about to order a drink. Rembrandt creates the space by inviting the characters within the painting outwards into our space. We do not inhabit the painting's space but the characters are about to come into ours, through a use of proposed movement by placing specific objects such as the spear or the hand gesture in relation to the rest of the characters.

By placing ourselves within the painting, it is supposed to add an engagement with the viewer allowing for a relation between the artists observation, the subject matter and the audience emotional connection. If the viewer has a belief or need to gain a connection to the speciality within a painting then, for the viewer to satisfy their gratification, a perceived understanding that they can be within or part of the painting is required or must be visible. Such is not present within Katz painting, though this is seen in the other two; in a way we are being more pulled towards works or images that we are more able to place ourselves into, as it creates a greater form of connection between our observation and the image we are observing. The image is there to create a need or want to either be the person within the advert or inhabit such a proposed lifestyle. There is nothing wrong with this form of attitude, however I think it demonstrates that the experience of a painting or a piece of artwork can have a relation between the viewers knowledge based understanding and how they perceive the world surrounding them.

Now by observing flatness within paintings and take into account how one is observing the relationship between flatness and the painting. There is a possible understanding one should be able to realise that flatness is a structural property of painting, as long as that painting holds specific elements. Works by painters who use

a lot of paint are not flat, but the surface material is, thereby allowing for the assumption and connection between painting and flatness.<sup>119</sup> In the case of artist conscious decision to use the idea of flatness within their work is a different matter. Manet may or may not have been aware of the concept of flatness in relation to a stylistic change within his painting style, but not as a fundamental part of flatness, as Greenberg reasons, the flatness of the New York painters of the 1950s. One example would be the observation of Rothko's colour field paintings where he uses a layering technique to apply the paint onto the canvas that is similar to the old masters. Rothko use thin layers of paint to build up the surface structure. While more notable painters, who's works are demonstrating an approach to flatness via the use of paint, are people such as Barnett Newman or Ad Reinhardt, who used paint to express the characteristic of the paints colours and therefore the aspect of painting. The Greenbergian reasoning or relationship between flatness as a form of self-reflective criticism is at hand possible, but the misuse of Kantian philosophy to drive such a proposition forwards becomes problematic. The observation of works by Manet, though such works contain the property of flatness they are not directly linked with the Abstract Expressionist/Minimalist painters within the New York School, the evolution of observing and critically analysing painting as a medium is there, and is present within Greenbergian thought. But such presence is not directly applied to being a full on observation of flatness as a part of painting. In my mind these properties of flatness are more greatly explored by painters such as Katz, where flatness deliberately is part of the painting's appearance and structure, and not due to the formal qualities of the painting.

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<sup>119</sup> There are many painters who attempt to create surface texture or create paintings that are removed from the idea of flatness. In this case I am referring to a flatness that is indivertible visible, one that holds and aims towards the property of flatness. Frank Auerbach's paintings has a texture that is not flat but the painting canvas is flat.

# Art, the end of art, art judgment, philosophy...

## 1. Introduction.

We can observe the change in the attitude towards what the classification of art changed into. For example, to understand an aesthetic artistic experience without a reference to the postmodern change in artistic theory removes the focus on critical analysis between aesthetic as a sensory study and aesthetic as an art study. The observation is related to an underlying feature of what art is, in relation to the developed theory after modernism.<sup>120</sup> The relationship between “*anything can be art*” and what art is, often becomes a prevalent issue. We cannot rely on Kantian interpretation of art since there is the link with beauty. Art can hold a property of beauty but to maintain an appropriate context art needs to be defined as something more. The observation into what things can be defined as art or what makes art should be observed and considered, in my mind by covering these topics. This observation provides the reasoning why the change in artistic creation and observation happened, but it also allows for the change and need to observe aesthetic in the end. By observing aesthetic the understanding between the difference between art, objects and how our experiences of these things are different. Thereby making this observation of art and its end in some context helps to back up and provided the subject matter for some of the points being made.

Why is it possible for a person to make the proclamation that a football game is an artwork? In today’s context there is a possibility for such a notion to exist, the reasoning and why in some case the outcome is either true or false, falls behind a relationship and interaction between the theory concerning *the End of Art* and art as a place of philosophical discourse. Though philosophical thinking always has been present within the Western Canon, its presence is more visible some may say within

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<sup>120</sup> One of the reasons for focusing in so extensively on Kant is this relation between the developing of modernism, Greenbergian thought, and therefore the change and attitude towards what art is. Without the focus of Kant, most of the observable and continuing argument developed will in my mind fail to persist.

today's artistic sphere. This section also gets rid of the institutionalisation of art. Dealing with this problem is important within a developing elitism.

## 2. Kant and Genius.

Clearly the idea of a singular person deemed as a genius working away in their studio producing artworks that surpass others is far away from today's reality. Even when applying this theory to an art historical context it is hard to find many whom apply to this gamut notion. Though there are still people out there whom possess the notion of genius within many different fields of contemporary life, most of these people are generally part of a team or a group working together to achieve a specific goal. So how does one deal with this situation and what is the purposiveness of a genius within today's society if any exist?

*Genius is the talent (or natural gift) which gives the rule to Art. Since talent, as the innate productive faculty of the artist, belongs itself to Nature, we may express the matter thus: Genius is the innate mental disposition (ingenium) through which Nature gives the rule to Art.<sup>121</sup>*

The *Genius* for Kant first and foremost is a talented individual whom is able to transcend the formalistic structures while upholding the properties of the harmonies within the natural structure. In terms of an artistic work, the work cannot just be a mere copy of an object that has been deemed beautiful. Kant does argue that art that is based around or upon the notion of copying a beautiful object will and cannot be considered to be art. It is within this notion that the idea of the genius lay, since there is still a possibility for a beautiful art, as long as such art is created by one who is considered to be a genius. Since the genius is still bound by the natural laws that govern the world they inhabit, Kant's argument brings about a rule for art being based from nature. It is interesting to observe the relationship between nature and art within Kant texts, the impact each have on the other. The

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<sup>121</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, 152.

experience of nature should be through an almost formulated artistic observation while simultaneously the creation of artistic works should be through the governing of nature and natural observation. The act of the *Genius* is to fulfil a criterion were they surpass the natural observation. In relation to a more contemporary context what does the *Genius* function as?

Since there are more than one artist producing and working within the arts, not all of them can be considered to be genius. Nor can all of them not be considered not producing art. To deal with this situation it is proposed that any artist, whom is not considered to be a genius, is and will always be practicing the art of imitation. Not an imitation based around nature or beauty but the imitation based around the parameters set out by the defined genius.<sup>122</sup> In a contemporary context the genius can be placed upon individual artists who stands in the art historical field, but are not dependent on the laws of nature, but rather on the context by which the specific art was produced. Two examples would be animals in formaldehyde and paintings in a style of photo-blur. The first is by Damien Hirst, the second belonging to Gerhard Richter. In these instances, both artists have done something that transcends the parameters at the time; they created a new form of subjectivity within that practice. From the point these works were created it marked a point where anything after these works that have been made in similar styles will always be considered to hold the conception of imitation. Now one can argue that Hirst and Richter are not necessarily genius, in that they do not continually make works that can be considered to be of genius status. For Kant, the genius would be creating a stream of artworks that conform to the above-mentioned criteria. There is a point to make in that the need of genius is not necessary for the creation of artworks in general,<sup>123</sup> due to the fact that lesser artist practice a form of imitation, an imitation based on the *Genius* works noticeable quality. Amongst amateur painters who create pictures of flowers, houses in fields, abstract works, etc. in these cases even the amateur artist and those who consider themselves to be professional artist are still

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<sup>122</sup> Murray., 202.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

producing creative works of art within the boundary of imitation. It should be considered that through the practice of imitation eventually specific artists/ people will be able to attain a notion of genius.

By delving deeper into this notion of a genius, one can adapt it towards the creation of things such as group/community artistic projects. Whereby the artist (*Genius*) brings certain aspects from the community together and by doing so enacts an artistic practice with a specific value. Even though the participants have been doing the work for many years either as a hobby or for a living. The artist (*Genius*) allows developing such work from the status of something that acts as an imitation practice into something that belongs to artistic expression. A problem that will arise is that the participating artist is still enacting a form of imitation from that of the original first communal artwork/project. By pursuing such a classification of the idea of a genius then there will be a point when there are no longer any artist within the contemporary world that can be considered to be geniuses, therefore an understanding of genius can be identified as Bradley has within *Kant on Genius and Art*. The first part of the classification of a genius should relate to the artist, the second part relates to genius what we now would call creativity.<sup>124</sup> In this case the genius can still be applied towards the creation of artistic works or artist and if one allows for the genius to uphold both of these properties, it can be used towards the application of artistic discourse.

Where does one draw the line between the imitation and genius? Within a context of contemporary art, some would argue that the Kantian notion does not hold up, due to the application of beautiful art being made by a genius and contemporary artist do not attempt to make beautiful works. A genius cannot exist within any artist who does not create works that are deemed to be beautiful. By breaking down the term of art via a Kantian observation it becomes clear, that for Kant art holds two different properties or rather meanings. There is general art, which is the majority

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

of things being placed under one umbrella as to say, most things that are in production or things that are made. While the beautiful (fine) art consists within the general term of art, but is the genius art form and can only be practiced by those who encompass the quality of genius.<sup>125</sup>

My method of working does in some part attempt to derive an avoidance of creating works that follow imitation. Now in this case the imitation is a relation to my own work rather than that of other artist. Imitation as shown in some way is unavoidable when conducting or creating works of art especially within the field of painting. In this case the imitation of other artist by a painter is a positive outcome, the imitation of one's own work is a negative. By allowing for self-imitation one is removing in part a self-critic. The failure of Greenberg is the assumption on self-critic being part of the active created work when in fact to be self-critical one must create works that are in part in a state of change. The emphasis on self, being internal, means that created artwork should reflect such a state. I will admit that such a reflection is difficult to capture when creating works within a limited stylistic manner. In a way I do not think that it is possible for an artist to become or uphold a function of being a genius since any person who is a practicing artist in some form are enacting a form of imitation. The outcome we should strive for is towards making artistic works that are aiming towards a form of genius status.

### **3. Art: Kant.**

Kant's view on art for me holds an interesting application that can be used to construct an observation of the creation of art in relation to an everyday object per se. There is a possibility to devise the difference between these by observing specific properties depending on these different properties the understanding of whether a thing can be considered to be art can hold true. .

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 203.

1. In a Kantian notion a piece of driftwood that has been formed by weathering can be observed as a work of art. Unlike a beehive, which cannot be considered to hold the idea of a work of art but a product of nature.<sup>126</sup> The differences are placed upon the creation of the form within the object. For the beehive the creation of the structure is due to the natural instinct of the bees to create such shapes.<sup>127</sup> While the driftwood, or wood owns its shape towards the external interaction with weather. The initial shape of the wood is created through a natural interacting, but once the pieces of wood is separated from a tree and is placed as a separate entity its shape and texture is determined by independent weathering through time. The wood in this case is not observed to be serving a natural purpose; a form of instinctual law does not drive its construction. Though this is not entirely true, Kant is no longer viewing the piece of driftwood as a biological entity but rather as something that is independent. Wood is observed as a separate thing from its original plant/tree structure, which has an instinct, to reach for sunlight. The created property or form is still independent from its purpose. If the wood is broken and weather etc. its purposiveness of being wood still exist. We recognize it as wood with a specific form. While if the form of a beehive changes—the hexagon structure—the purposiveness, storing honey, would disappear. Unlike the beehive structure, the basal form of the hexagonal structures can be considered to hold a property of art.
2. Art via ability or the human ability to produce something, a form of skill, though not directly related to a modern interpretation of skill.<sup>128</sup> The ability to think of something as a perfect form or construction but not to possess the ability to create this object belongs for Kant within the realm of art.<sup>129</sup> The

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<sup>126</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, 147.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.



art holds a property where such manner according to Kant is not possible. This has a fairly faulty presumption if one attempts to apply it towards a modern day setting.

3. The distinction between art and handicraft (craft). For Kant art is related to freedom, while the craft is a form of work. The distinctive difference has to do with freedom, whereby the freedom has a purposiveness of play, creating a feeling of pleasure and thereby creating the notion of art. Handicraft on the other hand holds the property of work, people do it to earn money rather than for the pleasure.<sup>130</sup>

In today's society the consideration of something being handicraft is often related to doing something that is not work, or something that is done by someone who is doing it for an enjoyment. Now for Kant handicraft was in relation to earn money, as such being part of work. Therefore when one is referring to handicraft one can argue that it is relating to making money. Now one can observe the relationship as that work is driven by the "*account of its effect*"<sup>131</sup>, while art is driven by the pursue of pleasure via play. By Kant's own overview there will be a difficulty to decide, which jobs will maintain or can be considered to be art and those that should be considered to be handicraft. An element that we can relate to our contemporary society and thereby in sort to the creation of artworks; in so far as what part of art, is work and therefore a handicraft, whiles what belongs to art or rather fine art. If a banker who enjoys the participation of banking, though did not enter it entirely for the money, but for some form of pleasure, should that job not therefore be considered as art rather than work? While making actual artworks can be very

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Distinguish this from things such as scientific research, whereby one might not be able to understand the specific concept but through research and experimentation an understanding will become visible and therefore the concept is understood.

<sup>130</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, 147.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

profitable, so these can be turned into work; an artist is no longer making the work for the sake of pleasure, but for the money that comes from the creation.<sup>132</sup>

In these three cases Kant is only describing what the general term of art is. This does not mean that an artist creating works of art is engage in the practice of art. Through the above deduction such notion can be made. At the same time the fine arts/beautiful art as described is only a part of the general arts. As such today any activity undertaken can be considered to hold some property of art, and often is considered to be art.

Beginning with:

*Play, pleasure, work:*

Within our modern society these three elements are interwoven in some form or another as stated above. Work can be pleasurable and to deny such notion is to reject a fundamental understanding of why people pursue a specific field of work. Not all work is pleasurable but some work will be for a selective group of people.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> This is very much present within today's art market, or artist who choose to repeat and construct artworks over and over again using the same formula, ending up with a work, since the view that repetition is work. It is up to an individual to decide what aspects of art and work are interdependent, but in most cases once an artist becomes or is starting to become profitable, or gain recognition (this can also include recognition amongst peers or teachers) then that artist's work is dependent on that repetition creating a contentment within their art practice thereby removing any willingness to explore further; if one is supposed to observe Kantian thought then this should become a defining part of art, artists should create a multitude of different objects, or attempt to do so, and not repeatedly make the same thing over and over again, the idea of a series within painting is therefore bad and cannot be considered to be art, but craft.

<sup>133</sup> There are visible records of un-employed people being unhappy due to not having a job; the link often drawn between the un-employed as being people who do not want to work, or people who would find work unsatisfactory, it also demonstrates that the idea of leisure time in some sense, i.e. when doing nothing can become boring or harmful. Example of this are seen in papers such as; Benjamin Crost, "*The Effects of Subsidized Employment on Happiness: Evidence from Germany*," (January 31, 2010): 1-24,

As such any activity that is somewhat pleasurable should within a contemporary context be considered to be within the notion of art in a metaphysical form. This does not provided the possibility to create a reasoning towards saying “*I am going to do some art*” when in fact one is just going to work.

*Skill as an aspect of human function:*

The important part of this thing lays on the function and its relation to what is being created. One example from Kant is the observation of a shoe. A shoemaker should know how to make the perfect shoe but due to their lacking ability within the creation of a shoe, the shoe will always fail to reach such a standard of a perfect shoe.<sup>134</sup> The problem of the shoemaker example is within the assumption that a person knows how to make something perfectly in relation to what they are creating. One cannot make something without the knowledge of making it, or an investigation into making it. Consider making the ideal work of art, within Kantian thought an artist should be able to construct such an image or know what such an artwork would be. Lets construct a premise of such a situation.

*If one was to imagine a perfect work of art, and the work, was the act of imagining the perfect work of art.*

In this situation the perfect work of art is imagining the perfect work of art. The working process becomes a repeating activity in the act of imagining, a metaphysical act. The imaging of the perfect work of art is still at some level restrained within the act of imagining; as such the process of imagining becomes the artworks form. When this does occur the act becomes not a perfect act since the artwork has a form,

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[http://www.eale.nl/Conference2010/Programme/PaperPostersessions%20II/add129287\\_jQCoTVNbhh.pdf](http://www.eale.nl/Conference2010/Programme/PaperPostersessions%20II/add129287_jQCoTVNbhh.pdf) (accessed November 17, 2012).

Fumio Ohtake, “Unemployment and Happiness,” *Japan Labor Review*, Vol.9 No.2 (Spring 2012): 59-74,

[http://www.jil.go.jp/english/JLR/documents/2012/JLR34\\_ohtake.pdf](http://www.jil.go.jp/english/JLR/documents/2012/JLR34_ohtake.pdf) (accessed November 17, 2012).

<sup>134</sup> Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, 147.

thereby the creation needs to be rethought starting the process over from the beginning again thereby creating a looping effect.

Whiles the creation of a shoe, or the knowledge of how to create a perfect shoe might exist. The knowledge to create the perfect art cannot exist within the context of a modern progressive society. For Kant such notion is possible, due to the beautiful art (fine art) and genius. If we observe the shoe via an artistic or (fine art) notion then the shoemaker can be an artist when the creation of the shoe is done following a specific criterion. However if one would assume that there is a person who has the skill to create the perfect shoe, and then that person would no longer be practicing art, due to the fact that the person would only be creating for the benefit of the wage. The person has become a worker.

*Form, relation to creation and function:*

To place this within any context today, Kant's statement surrounding wood and a beehive would either be swapped or both would become considered to be natural. This is due to the advancement of specific technologies and understanding and as such a change in what is considered to be natural has occurred. The reason for Kant to make the claim that a beehive cannot be considered to hold a property of art, is due to its form in relation to the function of the specific object. For the beehive, the hexagon shape is the most sufficient way to store honey, therefore the function of the storage space is fully utilised by its form. If such observation is made onto contemporary society, whereby the function of something should adhere to its form then to make things to be consider to hold the states of art becomes difficult. To elaborate on this, consider things such as a painting or a video. These are of an unambiguous form that is dedicated by its function to represent an explicit ideal linked to their own specific medium and purpose within that medium. Like the large formalist colour field paintings, or any painting for that matter, are and will always be bound by the structure of the surface the paint is placed upon. Another example would be the observation of video art. In this case the form which is the medium either a film strip or a digital file on a disc, projection or TV frame, etc. is restricted

and in unison with the function, the display of moving images. In this case Kantian though fails as it determines or limits the possibility of things to hold a position of being art, due to the fact that the form of an artwork has to be freestanding from its function. This problem becomes slightly difficult to deal with due to the fact that most forms can be argued to follow their function, and in most case the form is often dependent on its function.

Applying Kantian notions of art, genius etc. towards a contemporary setting is possible if it is tweaked and adjusted slightly. If it is done then Kant does have a possibility to still function as a reasonable philosopher to study, allowing for Greenberg assertion to hold some ground. For Murray the above three points were laid out as guidance for the observers to make the judgment of what is art and what was not artistic.<sup>135</sup> The three distinctive points function well as an observation between differences of scientific/logical thought, and a freely creative thought process. Using a more scientific approach towards the study of art there is a visible difference between a general observation of art and that proposed through the philosophical discourse. The presence of philosophical observation in an attempt to define art often fails, as it cannot allow for all the possibilities of art. In many cases the observation and philosophical practice of art can be seen to hold an element of failure. Unlike scientific research the ontological observation of art is different. There cannot be one defined theory or overall observation of theoretical judgment. What is to define art for some, cannot be observed by others and respected as hold the property of art. Kant defined this as a form of taste. Richard Kamber, within his essay *Experimental Philosophy of Art*, brings up the difference between peoples opinion about art. The research demonstrates how the variance in people's opinion concerning art is great, when they are asked question relating to the context of what art is.<sup>136</sup> So therefore lets observe the different notions of what certain people view

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<sup>135</sup> Murray., 199-214.

<sup>136</sup> Within the essay Kamber goes through his research that touches on a series of questions relating to images of art. The questions were mostly answered by professors from colleges and universities within the USA. Even though most of the

about what the ontology of art is within a more contemporary context from that of Kant.

#### 4. Art.

*(N)euroimaging experiments might show that there are distinctive neural patterns associated with the contemplation of typical and prototypical artworks but not with some of the atypical objects(.)*<sup>137</sup>

Does such statement tell us anything about the artistic reasoning or theories of today? No, not in my view. The fact that there is a possibility that measurements show specific parts of our brain is activated by specific objects is possibly irrelevant (though it will be an area covered later as a observation of neuroaesthetic). The quote is there to set a starting point and bring about a visible example whereby the notion of, what is art has a defining boundary. If the above statement is true then it does mean that there is already an established formation or understanding of what is art and what is not art. This has been developed either through an evolutionary process, or a cultural developmental process, i.e. the nature versus nurture debate. One observation connected to this is the proposed position of evolutionary development of art through human history and how this has influenced the creation of specific artistic theories such as aesthetic judgment after the development of modernism. Denis Dutton is one philosopher and theorist who has approached this subject about aesthetic and its relation to evolutionary development. Within this context Dutton's writing will be observed through Kamber's discussion of Dutton, as

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questions asked showed a very similar answer by the group there was still according to Kamber enough evidence to provide for a basis that proved a notion of differential understanding of what art is.

<sup>137</sup> Richard Kamber, "Experimental Philosophy of Art," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 69, No. 2, (May 12, 2011): 205, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1540-6245.2011.01461.x/asset/j.1540-6245.2011.01461.x.pdf?v=1&t=hgpcy2bg&s=9af9bbf7c779d30225f3bf44051694f0d67ec341> (accessed June 25, 2012).

a build-up towards the change in the attitude of artistic understanding after the modernist and the development of artistic practice through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Kamber points out, that for Dutton the function of art is towards taste within a social context as an evolutionary adaptation.<sup>138</sup> Within this context, Dutton developed a list of criteria's for the specific of artistic creation or rather a list for the identification of artistic works to distinguish the difference between artworks and regular objects.<sup>139</sup>

*Direct pleasure*

*Skill and virtuosity*

*Style*

*Novelty and creativity*

*Criticism*

*Representation*

*Special focus*

*Expressive individuality*

*Art traditions and institutions*

*Imaginative experience*

Kamber moves on to point out that Dutton's list functions only work's within a set of conditions that function to embody artistic practise and work. These conditions pointed out by Kamber are:

- Works are intended for an audience in some form or another.<sup>140</sup>
- The works are in a state of being, (referred to by Kamber as an artefact).<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

- The artist or creator of the work still has an interest within the work even after it is finished.<sup>142</sup>

The last point referring to the ability to observe ones older works and recognise them, or be able to distinguish between past works and future works. (One characteristic or application of this is to create a boundary or barrier against things such as animal art. For Dutton the notion that an animal is making art does not work due to not meeting the above criteria. On the other hand Dutton's criteria can be used to exclude artist working within the field of art who do not follow these specific rules.) The distinctive pragmatism of Dutton's evolutionary theory of art in relation to human evolution misses or do not take into account the social changes across history, as stated by Kamber.<sup>143</sup> Though some aesthetic propositions might hold some form of relation towards the evolutionary process, an artistic aesthetic interpretation cannot solely be linked to evolution of humankind. In relation to observation and creation of art evolutionary aesthetics can describe our specific aesthetic choices as people or animals on a fundamental level.<sup>144</sup>

So why bring this up, apart from a relation to evolutionary aesthetic development. Well if one continues the observation of Kamber's text, there is an interesting distinction made about an example produced by Dutton. The example relates to an observation of sport events, such as American Football, and how they in some way can be considered to be a piece of art. Such an event cannot be defined as a piece of art according to Dutton. Even though it fulfils many of the above criteria.<sup>145</sup> In contradiction Kamber's research provides some evidence that a small group of people who work within the art field will agree to such an event being a piece of

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> In most cases these are related to needs or likes, similar to a universal understanding as proposed by Kant. In my relation to the aesthetic experience, it has to do with certain judgment of things people can agree on.

<sup>145</sup> Kamber., 205.



artwork, (around 4% of the total number of people questioned).<sup>146</sup> The proposition is that even though there is some form of reasoning behind an evolutionary developed driven aesthetics it cannot fully function towards arguing why certain experiences are viewed as artistic or non-artistic. In most cases Dutton's aesthetics is based around the development towards things such as paintings, or visually created objects, rather than a complete aesthetic experience of the sensory perception. By creating a criteria such as Dutton has, and then denying specific things, which fit such a criteria, becomes problematic. If anything can be art and we can observe such things all the time, in a way art becomes stagnated, the idea of something being art becomes lost. Now the criteria's observed are part of an observation in dealing with the differentiation between things that are considered artworks and those, which are normal everyday things. However by, introducing these criteria we are instantly removing the uniqueness of the ability of art to retain that it can possess anything. So an observation onto what makes; an object an object; an artwork an artwork and a non-artistic event compared to that of a non artistic event; shall be pursued.

What is interesting in this observation is that there is a small amount of people who would consider a sport event as a piece of art. In an argumentative proposition one should be able to confide that a sports event such as an American football game, or an ice hockey game can hold certain elements of artistic value. The use of advertisement, cheerleaders (objectification of women),<sup>147</sup> social ideas, aggression, competition, being the best, winning and teamwork are some examples of elements amongst many that can be considered. These can be analysed as a critical function within the artistic appreciation of the event. The observation of this event is an artistic experience due to the fact that it is giving me an insight into the psyche and

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> To argue that cheerleaders are a form of objectification exhorting onto women by men is visible. The clear line that cheerleaders of a specific group must have a specific look and body stereotype. By making the point that cheerleaders are sexual object one is asserting that all male/female might prefer one specific shaped woman, a stereotyping of what is considered to be sexy etc.

physical experiences of the competitiveness of athletic sports. This is achieved through the interaction and dedication of the fans to their team, the interaction and dedication of the players, and thereby driven by the fans' need of authentication to their dedication and at the same time showing a world where money drives and determines many outcomes within the system of the game. The visible differences between the observing and cheering crowds who are in many cases defined by their team preferences, and the responsive and active participants within the sport, who are performing for the crowd as well as themselves. This example is just to show how the experiences of observing one of these type of sport events could bring about an artistic experience and be categorised as art within a specific context. The problem with this assertion is as mentioned above the very low percentage agreeing to that a sport event can be considered to be art. A visible compromise and a more traditional approach dealing with the subject matter of things present within sporting events can be seen in the work, *Track and Field* by Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla. Here they are pursuing the topic of sport and its relation to society with the work being that of an upside-down placed tank with a treadmill on top. Placed within the space of a Biennial it is more approachable and acceptable as artwork than that of a sporting event. Allora's and Calzadillas' work is placed within the context and environment of an artistic sphere. However due to the structure of the work it could technically be placed anywhere and still achieve the same form of interpretations from the viewers unlike that of a sport event. Another example could be the film *Zidane: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Portrait*, directed by Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno.<sup>148</sup>

The problem with the sporting event being an artwork is related to the initial acceptances of what art is and its relation to specific things. Specific contexts derives the notion of art hence the list from Dutton. However the list does not fully function

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<sup>148</sup> There is an interesting characteristic within the movie, it can be seen as art or a documentary and the movie holds a close resemblances to *Football As Never Before*, a similar style film from the 1970 following footballer George Best, made by Hellmuth Costard. Both these films are following one player in real time for the whole game.

as an autonomous overview of the experience and observation of artistic works within a theoretical position unrelated to the aesthetic experience. This is discussed in Arthur Danto's essay *The End of Art*. Danto's essay focuses on an attempt to bring about a defence of his previous statements made about art, dealing with the change in artistic practise, the development of modernism and post modernism and the changes from a linear narrative to an open concept.<sup>149</sup> Dutton's work is more related to the evolutionary approach, an area of research that is important but does not cover the raising issue of why specific ideas and theories were constructed after modernism and through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and onwards. In the following discussion I will concentrate on an observation that deals with how the change in art and the understanding that the *End of Art* argument was a way to deal with the transformation of artistic practice from a set discipline into a multiplicity activity.

## 5. The End of Art.

To begin with the statement *The End of Art* and its implication will be discussed. The origins of this statement can be seen from or is rather taken from Hegelian thought, from Hegel's opinion of the Geist<sup>150</sup>, and its transformation through history, ending up in Germany, and whereby Hegel declared the end of history. It is through this summary that *The End of Art* comes from. Within Hegel's argument, the Geist will have achieved its end and thereby the history will have an end allowing for a continuation but no more advancement, repeating the same over and over again. The above idea was then further explored and followed by philosophers such as Nietzsche, Marx and Engels in different forms.<sup>151</sup> The difference visible between Hegel and Danto is that *The End of Art* proposed by Danto

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<sup>149</sup> There is clearly no linear progression of art. Through history the art world has change, not as a progressive story but rather one that turns and skips around.

<sup>150</sup> The Geist being a spirit of cultural movement through a civilisation and though a civilisation might have ceased to exist the Geist or spirit would have moved onwards, eventually ending up in Germany.

<sup>151</sup> Marx and Engels view on the end of history as an end to class struggles. Whiles Nietzsche and Heidegger dealt with the idea of the end of art based around Hegelian thought.

does not take on the same observation as that of Hegel. Danto does not describe that the after-effect of *The End of Art*, had a continuing struggle between what art is and things that are not art.

There is an acknowledgment by Danto that though Hegel's claim is within a specific time period, his assertion is true by his own conviction, that the end of art is through the understanding that art moves along its own historical path allowing for it to reach an end. (From a historical position, a historian cannot fully comprehend their position and discussions until the end of an event.) Danto argues that while the history of art has in the past been in a period of continuation, at the time of his written proposition *The End of Art*<sup>152</sup>, there had been a point where art itself came to its conclusion. Similar to what Hegel's saw as being the reason for the end of history—he saw as being part of his time—happening via the attainment of an philosophical consciousness that dealt with freedom, as such from that point on all were free.<sup>153</sup> Hegel therefore argued that there could be no more history after this point, and anything that does occur happens only as a product of the conflict surrounding freedom. There could not be any more narrative in the furthering of freedom.<sup>154</sup> Here is the similarity of *The End of Art* with *The End of History*, it is the use of something coming to an end, and thereon the activities or in case of art the practice cannot in a sense move forwards but rather stays within a specific boundary. The fact is when the reasoning for the end of art, is more related to art becoming less restricted, the end is referring towards the end of classical thought and a beginning of a multiplicity of possibilities. (Referring back to Greenberg's misuse in so far as to create a formalist Kantian theory for painting.) Danto uses a

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<sup>152</sup> Arthur C. Danto, "The End of Art: A Philosophical Defence," *History and Theory*, Vol. 37, No4. (December, 1998): 127-143, <https://www2.southeastern.edu/Academics/Faculty/jbell/endofart.pdf> (accessed June 25, 2012).

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

similar faculty in that his proposition lies within the adaptation of philosophical consciousness as one of the subject matters of artistic practice.<sup>155</sup>

So what is the end of art? Danto defined this as the change from an art historical narrative structural observation onto a free form. The movements are able to explore any direction and thereby removing a continual stream of narratives that can be followed through an art historical context. The problem with this is that it focuses on a western tradition of art similar to Hegel; there is little focus on other areas of the art historical advancement through the world. The fact that one can assume that there is a linear art historical narrative even in a western prospective is in itself a fallacy. Danto does attempt to deal with this issue by unifying *essentialism and historicism*.<sup>156</sup> It is a way around the problem created within the historical narrative of art and the development of what constitutes as art. Adding *essentialism and historicism*<sup>157</sup> together the opportunity to observe art historical changes and narrative through the ages can be made and thereby allow for the argument towards the end of art. It also allows for the plurality of art that has taken place within the context after the end of art. In Danto's argument—bringing over a universal concept towards the differences between pre and post end of art—the tool by which this happens is through a notion of philosophical attainment. According to Danto art attempted to attain a form of self-understanding through an approach of philosophical observations and practice.<sup>158</sup>

Danto argues that due to the relationship between the artistic works and the apparent subject matter of philosophical ideas art in so far removed itself from the context of philosophy, a form of philosophical disenfranchisement of art,<sup>159</sup> creating

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>159</sup> This issue is raised within an essay by, Danto, "The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art", Grand Street, Vol. 4, No. 3 (spring 1985), 171-189, <http://www2.southeastern.edu/Academics/Faculty/jbell/disenfranchisement.pdf>

a distinctive differentiating direction between art and philosophy.<sup>160</sup> Due to this art was able to remove itself from over-empowering philosophical thinkers. Danto saw these people acting towards their own fear of artists attempting as these philosophers saw it to become part of philosophical discourse. A new way to make, argue and create new philosophical understanding as such this fear was used to act as a force in some way by preventing artists from achieving and developing.<sup>161</sup> Since this disenfranchisement art and philosophy was able to go separate ways while at the same time uphold a relationship.

The outcome of such observation provides one notion of what art can be after this *end of art* affair. The struggle between the subject matter of attaining a philosophical self-understanding or rather a philosophical attainment, followed alongside with an aesthetic essentialism. Under no circumstance is this, attempting to portray a theory of art or art practice, nor as will be shown, is there or has there been created a universally accepted theory of art. It is only an overview of what can be observed from Danto's argument concerning the end of art. The opposite side of the argument about the end of art lay within Hegelian philosophy. Danto's adaptation of Hegel allows for his theory of the end of art to be constructed. We should all agree and it is quite easily to agree with the idea that things come to an end; as such there will be some point that history or art will have reached some form of end. Most likely this end is in relation to our hindsight of the thing we are observing. In many cases it is the way the end occurs that will cause the problem rather than things having an end.

## **6. The problem with disenfranchisement.**

The end point is definitive—it does not move or change—it is depended on a set of rules that determine the idea of an end point, such as that of the end of a novel, or a movie. These things will have an end by rules that determine their lengths and physical properties. Danto's argument relies on the notion that art has

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<sup>160</sup> Danto, "The End of Art." 134.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

somehow managed to free itself through philosophical discourse and that any newly created works of art will abide towards this function. Within this context not every artwork created after the end of art can be considered to be art. Danto's argument therefore places a restrictions onto what is and can be considered to be art from the end of art and onwards.

Leon Rosenstein provides a different view that challenge or takes on some of Danto's argument. Starting off with the observation over the Hegelian end, stating that Hegel has a point, Rosenstein end theory does not reflect the social changes that have occurred through the history since Hegel was alive, history continued onwards.<sup>162</sup> Rosenstein does move on to question if there is a possibility of an end point of art. Though Hegel was wrong with his timing it does not mean that his assertions are not true. Rosenstein does confirm that the end of art has occurred but states that it was much earlier than that of Danto's observation. Unlike Danto's argument relating to the art or work of art, Rosenstein argues that it is not an end to art but an end to art theory.<sup>163</sup>

The idea lays on the fringe between the notions whether art and philosophy is elevated by its disenfranchisement. For Rosenstein, there was no disenfranchisement, but rather a forceful combination of art and philosophy; arts attempt to transform itself into a part of philosophy.<sup>164</sup> If one takes a view of such notion through a Platonic observation, whereby the practice and creation of art is through a focus on philosophical discourse, the art will fail to do what philosophy does.<sup>165</sup> (The image or ideal form of a chair is universal, whiles a chair is just a copy of this ideal form. Same with artistic creation surrounding philosophical discussions, these works will never hold the same level of value as a philosophical discussion

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<sup>162</sup> Leon Rosenstein, "The End of Art Theory," National Humanities Institute, Volume 15, No. 1 (2002): 33, <http://www.nhinet.org/rosenstein15-1.pdf> (accessed June 25, 2012).

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>165</sup> Danto., 134.

can.) In this case the outcome is not a positive one for art or philosophy as stated by Rosenstein.<sup>166</sup>

When artists are attempting to portray an artistic notion based around a philosophical argument or theory, they do so through an active observation of the theory, the outcome of the artwork via this observation can in many cases be narrow. The transformation and outcome only serves to portray specifics of the artist's intentions. "*They like a form, not for the sake of what it is, but for the sake of what it expresses.*"<sup>167</sup> Through this basis, a misinterpretation or misguidances of philosophical understanding can become visible and it does not leave much for the discussion of philosophical understanding. Since the discussions surrounding the artwork or artistic expression will relate to the art or mostly what the art is about, it is difficult to uphold any discussion on specific philosophical subject matter when the starting point is fairly limited in its proposition. As an example one can compare a philosophical written or spoken text such as a book or article, or a lecture, with that of an artwork (The artworks in this case would be one which hold a specific limited format. Participatory or performance art based works can still function as this form of discussion, and thereby hold a similar premise as a philosophical discussion)<sup>168</sup>. Within the book, articles and lecture ideas and theories can be

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<sup>166</sup> Rosenstein., 34.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid:34 Rosenstein uses a quote taken from Nietzsche *The Will to Power*.

<sup>168</sup> In this case the works created are part of a participatory practice laying in relation to the development of philosophical discussion. If one was to take a group of people and put them in a circle and tell them to discuss philosophical ideas, politics etc. the work would function as a open interpretive activity between artist work and philosophical discourse. The problem with this applicative observation is that the discussion occurring—unless people are invited to it—will have like-minded people with a fairly similar attitude towards most topics. An agreement will be reached fairly easily, with no major upsets. Setting up the work: the people who are viewing the work should not be able to comment of what is said within the circle removing any outside influences. A person is only allowed to comment once within the circle. This also creates a dimension whereby the viewer who at some point disagrees with what is being said cannot participate within the discussion. The people who are part of the work will therefore have a right to decide on the number of chairs within the circle as a form of



discussed and analysed. This does not happen within an artwork that is placed within the limited structure. Artworks that are about the projection of ideas, theories or interactions can still hold some form of connection, though it will have a starting point, which will be within the already achieved opinion of its source material.

## 7. So what...

The dualism concerning this problem is towards the end of art and a relationship with whether the philosophical disenfranchisement has a positive or negative outcome. In one aspect the outcome having an end is not possible when the presences of philosophical discourse is still possible.

My inclination is towards the negative since Danto's argument against philosopher's fear of art seems to be a bit ingenuous. There is a clear consensus amongst philosophers that the end of art and art theory has in some way occurred.<sup>169</sup> An explanation of why certain objects can be considered to be art or not, or why one views art, is not developed entirely through this notion of *End of Art*. One can see that there is a subject that should be considered, linking back to the observation of a sport event being an artistic experience. Such concept would not have been possible without the outcome of the end of art and art theory. One should be aware that it is a philosophically raised question (that sport can be an artistic experience) rather than an artistic action.<sup>170</sup> The question of whether such events will surpass the philosophical concept and become a viable artistic action; we can argue that if we get or convince a group of people to go to experience a sports event as an artistic action, then Danto's argument will somewhat hold true. The problem with this is

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democratic microcosms. If the majority of people dislike any person's opinion the group can then in theory remove that persons chair from the group, removing that persons opinion.

<sup>169</sup> Danto and Rosenstein do demonstrate this fairly well within their articles.

<sup>170</sup> The artistic action is present within works such as *Gloria* by Allora and Calzadilla.

that one is telling people to have an artistic experience, and such an experience should be different from that of observing the sports event.

If one looks back at Dutton's evolutionary view of aesthetic development, then these two experiences, observing a sports event and viewing it as an artwork in some form should be the same. However it is clear that if one was to do so, the experience of observing the sport event will come through a critical viewing of an artistic exercise. The sport event becomes something that is transfixed within a notion of viewing. In this instance neither an evolutionary aesthetic observation nor the somewhat philosophical placement onto artworks can give a good or solid answer or confirmation of the experience. Where does one go from here to avoid ending up going around in circles. One alternative would be to apply George Dickies' institutional theory of art, thereby accepting the notions that establish any criteria to be true as long as it is validated within this institution.<sup>171</sup> If an institution declares a sport event as art, therefore it is art. Asserting such a notion deliberately removes any philosophical discourse, or reasonable structure for debate to occur due to the fact that any statement made by the institution of art are finite. There should be a division between the understanding and arguments of what the end of art or art theory means or rather what its functions serves within the context of aesthetic observation.

Dominic McIver Lopes present an argument in his paper *Art without Art*<sup>172</sup> that is based around the problem within cultural differences and art. Lopes constitutes that there is a fallacy involved in the discussions that if cultures have art or not depends on certain criteria.<sup>173</sup> The conclusion comes from a problem that focuses on designation of what art is. A judgment of art in some prospect is made by the

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<sup>171</sup> Dickies' theory of art does come from a development from Danto's written essay in 1964 "*The Artworld*".

<sup>172</sup> Dominic McIver Lopes, "Art without 'Art'," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (January, 2007): 1-15, doi:10.1093/aesthj/aylo35 (accessed June 26, 2012).

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

determination that one has knowledge that it is art. In a culture whereby such knowledge does not exist, art cannot exist.

The translation that will be used is related to the above made arguments.

$\sigma$ - is an independent property of art that allows for one to make the judgment whether it is or is not art.

(N1) The observation of an object or experiences to be art is possible due to the condition of  $\sigma$ .

(N2) This object or experiences does not possess a condition  $\sigma$  therefore it cannot be art.

(N3) This object or experiences is art independently from your condition of  $\sigma$ .

(N4)  $\sigma$  does not hold any validation, therefore this object or experience is not art.

(N5)  $\sigma$  does not exist.

(N1) holds a general notion that what one considers to be art is based on a self-made judgment mostly linked to our taste. It allows for everyone to make a judgment that is neither right nor wrong. (N2) provides the support of this. For most people (N1) and (N2) are precise forms of judgment and experience of art. It provides a basic and un-harmful notion that it is OK to not like it or understand what it is because our differences allows for our own opinion and judgments. (N1) and (N2) are more likely to be related to aesthetic experience or specific conceptual ideas, an approach that can be placed upon the general population. (N3) is linked to the institutional theory of art. Unlike (N1) and (N2) it is to show that no matter what our opinion of what art is, there should be an authoritarian overview to define what is art and what is not art.

(N3) holds the problem that it is an enforced experience of art, though one might agree to the properties of art that have been assured by the authoritarian figure. It still holds the notion that one is observing art, rather than observing an artistic experience. When one goes to a gallery, museum or art event there will be an

understanding that one is observing art. Now if (N4) and (N5) are taken to be true then we will encounter the problem that (N1) and (N3) cannot be true. In this case the outcome will be that an artistic experience or an art object cannot exist. Most people will therefore declare it as a fallacy. Stating that (N5) is false, though (N4) can hold some truth, if  $\sigma$  in (N4) does not possess the same property as those of (N1) and (N3). In this situation such an argument does not work due to  $\sigma$  being a fixed property. Independently each statement is true, combined they cannot function. Therefore again there is a dualistic property towards the argument. It can hold both functions. If one presumes  $\sigma$  is a conceptual or aesthetic property, then the dualism is based around whether one holds a specific opinion on what the properties of art experience is based around.

## 9. Summary.

By observing theorisation of art and how the transformation of artistic theory has occurred does demonstrate in some form why such a transformation for some has caused problems. It becomes easier to determine that the relation between art and artistic theory lay within aesthetic observation. I will agree that the end of art has a more contextual link with the end of art theory, or rather the end towards the definitive definition of artistic practice as a unified field. Similar to the definition of a game, the outlining of art cannot be restrained by any set boundaries. Since this is the case the objective argument on what is art can never be fully made. We cannot make a claim of things that are and are not artistic works in some form.

In two ways this section demonstrates the objective viewing of art as a prospect of *theoreticalisation* such that confronts the understanding of particular creations and subjectivities within the artistic sphere. Either the acceptances of art having an end is acknowledge and thereby allowing for the connection between art and philosophy to occur. One's decision on what is art, then becomes reliant on our own acknowledgment or understanding of what art is, i.e. art no longer has a straight historical narrative but is rather in a state of flux between the free form and a

restrictive theoreticalisation. In most cases the outcome is either this new form of thinking, subconsciously or the observation onto the traditional aspect of art, one that is linked with the aesthetic experience. This is why I believe bringing up this subject matter relating to art and theory is important. Not only does the change in historical attitudes occur, but also such change should be encouraged and adapted by individuals who are engaged within a traditionalistic practice.

We can see such action within a Kantian thought if adapted to a modern context, though the observation is one that should not emulate Greenbergian ideas. The observation of how the perception of artistic work is created, and how and what an artist is referring to when making things, and if doing so for profit or for internal gratification or search for enlightenment. Either way of viewing creates a form of interaction with the observation of artistic works. In the end the observation and focus on experience of such works and our knowledge and reasoning for the creation and in some form elitist prospective can integrate and move around these areas.

# **Art through biological adaptation.**

## **1. Introduction.**

Evolutionary aesthetics searches to develop reasoning towards why we start creating artworks. What are the reason behind art and its function in relation to us? From the evolutionary point of view the development of specific aesthetic qualities have advanced from our origins as species. I think that the connection between our understanding of aesthetic experience in a philosophical way and the understanding of evolutionary development, are ways to explore why the world has become more picture/image dominated. For me this helps to justify particular features of society to exist in order to placate our species biological needs.

In many cases this field is not viewed upon by artist as reason for observing a theoretical understanding of why we do things in a particular manner. This normalisation that becomes apparent for me, demonstrates that art in itself has an inerrable outcome and as such I do not think we can justify and say that an artistic experience can hold a truly significant impact on a person when taken as a separate entity.

## **2. Art through biological adaptation and visual aesthetics.**

Why do we see or feel specific qualities towards certain aesthetic elements and does this have an impact on the relationship of viewing and experiencing art and our surroundings? Is there a link between our aesthetic experience and our evolutionary development? To make this observation into the biological proposition of aesthetics, the views of Bjørn Grinde on the subject matter will be considered. Unlike Dutton, whose focus lay in accordance to art, specifically on the development of artistic practice in relation to evolution, Grinde's approach towards the subject matter is that of why do we see and experience aesthetic things through the evolutionary development of our species. Does these experiences have any reason

behind them and as such does this have an effect on the experience in relation to viewing of things such as art.

Grinde makes the claim surrounding specific aesthetic appreciations and why we are driven towards certain aesthetic properties within the article *The Biology of Visual Aesthetics*.<sup>174</sup> In the article he states that we prefer certain visual stimulus to others due to these stimulus affect our reward centre within our brain.<sup>175</sup> The evolutionary aesthetics focuses towards why we perceive things to be attractive or rewarding, why certain colours are more rewarding than others or why certain landscapes are more aesthetically pleasing than others. The problem with making such an assumption is that it does not work as eloquently when applied towards our current society. Since we all have different understanding and aesthetic experience that allow for differences of opinions in relation to those experiences. One does not necessarily find specific landscape pleasing due to an evolutionary development, e.g. we can still find a snowy winter landscape aesthetically pleasing even though it present no benefit to us as a biological organism (the lack of food, the cold, and the snow will present several disadvantages to us in relation to survival). Yet there are some people who enjoy such a landscape, being within the space or just viewing it. In relation to the evolutionary characteristic, we enjoy the landscape due to the connection between an active reward within us, the feeling of fun playing in the snow, or taking part in specific activities such as ice-skating, skiing etc. The evolution within the aesthetic experience is no longer a part of survival or adaptation towards an environment but it is dedicated towards the achievement of pleasure and reward.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Bjørn Grinde, "The Biology of Visual Aesthetics," *Journal of Social and Evolutionary Systems*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1996):31-40, ISSN: 1061-7361 (accessed January 10, 2013).

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>176</sup> We can see these as an argument for why the need to explore the unknown, a need to develop and move towards something new present within our society. The reward is one of the driving forces for the development of our social structure.

In the case of a biological relation between art and aesthetic from an evolutionary point of view, as proposed by people such as Grinde, a distinction between the adaptation of the word “art” compared to the “fine art” can be placed into relation to its predominate origin within Western culture. The term “art” in this case will be used to reference to any creative human activity ranging from decorating ones home to composing a symphony, or making an interactive computer based program, is a essential part of the predominate human experience. In contrast, the term “fine art” is from a Western art historical prospective a function to define the activity to a rare and specific application of the human experience transferring this activity into the confinement within social and economical boundaries. “Art” or the engagement within art, through the relation to evolutionary biologically development and the aesthetic experience, provides an equally as important affiliation as eating, sleeping, etc., an issue raised by Ellen Dissanayake with her article “*Making Special*”: An Undescribed Human Universal and the Core of a Behavior of Art.<sup>177</sup>

### 3. Reward.

Reward is a part of the development of survival, though not part of the evolutionary process of adaptation. The brain awards and punishes for acts that are interlink with our need as organism to survive. Some examples made by Grinde are touching fire and the sensation of pain to prevent us burning or hurting ourselves, the release of hormones during an orgasm to create pleasure to encourage sexual activity in order to encourage reproduction. Grinde makes clear that the reward one experience does not have to relate to a pleasant experience. Reward is used as an open term to describe an experience that has occurred and provides some form of internal change, a form of variation, but not exclusively similar to that of a cathartic experience. Lets begin by observing the reward factor that has some involvement within the development of certain aesthetic modifications.

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<sup>177</sup> Ellen Dissanayake, ““Making Special”: An Undescribed Human Universal and the Core of a Behavior of Art,” *The World and I*, Vol. 19, No. 11 (November, 2004): 29, [http://www.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/LiteraryReading/Readings/Dissanayake\\_Special.pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/~dmiall/LiteraryReading/Readings/Dissanayake_Special.pdf) (accessed April 7, 2013).



Grinde points out that as humans developed and created more complex social structures and societies around the Upper Palaeolithic period, a change in the way humans decorated their bodies become more visible. The decoration was becoming more about creating links between people, their social standpoints or sexual attraction.<sup>178</sup> This change developed the need to create an aesthetic appearance that was a reflection of the body, but brought on rewards for the viewers within that culture. Development of body modification linked to sexual attraction, stems from this initial evolutionary progression. Within today's society the distinctive difference between people are adhered to this aesthetic need; makeup as a method to become more attractive for the opposite or same sex; clothes to provide a visible distinction between things such as social standing. All these elements works towards the need for some form of reward to become active within a person, by observing the need for sexual gratification, the active pursuing of a sexual partner for the attainment of a sexual orgasm.

If we take into account that the distinctive decorative appearance of people are done for the need to attain some form of reward, the difference apparent is that for other organism the drive is via the need for reproduction. Birds for example, show off or act in specific ways to impress a mate, providing a visible sign that the animal is healthy and genetically strong. The human usage of decoration has moved on from the need of reproduction towards the need of reward. The prevention of conception can be dated back in human history, documents from Ancient Egypt have been discovered describing different methods of preventing conception.<sup>179</sup> The reason why the body has not evolved something against contraception is in relation to our own evolutionary needs, we still need to reproduce, the reward given by the orgasm only encourage for more procreation but not as a form of reproduction. Developing

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<sup>178</sup> Grinde., 31.

<sup>179</sup> "A Brief History of Birth Control: Monday, May 3, 2010," The Time <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1983970,00.html> (accessed December 27, 2012).

the need to attain more gratifications people has developed the need to be more decorative. We can also view the significant of genetically strong mates, in the wild these are predominate those who flourish, within human society, a genetically strong mate is not as visible, a person can have genetic defects but still be presented as being a feasible mate due to their decorative approach to their body. Peoples decorative appearances, has changed through the centuries from active application to the body, to clothing styles, and body modification, amongst many other things.

The process of reward is applicable but unlike the orgasm these rewards are acting to encourage specific development of the human experience. People go to movies to feel specific emotions to achieve these specific states of minds at the time, rewarding them with a transformation of physically and emotionally states. Crying for some is rewarding, becoming scared or being in a state of fright is rewarding, a cathartic experience. Another example brought up by Grinde relates to excretion of excrement, the reward of doing so, in the case going to the toilet has elements of some sort of reward—though the act of excretion of excrement is not as pleasurable as an orgasm or as exciting as participating in certain activities, unless you are involved in coprophilia—but as a need to get rid of waste.<sup>180</sup> There is a clear reason why there are conditions within our social structure that develop towards certain types of aesthetic applications to be visible (changes in our appearance to be more attractive, or aesthetic created objects), but where does Grinde go with the difference between a normal aesthetic experience and that of artworks in relation to the evolutionary development?

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<sup>180</sup> Dissanayake., 33.

#### 4. Art and evolutionary aesthetics.

Grinde makes the distinction between the aesthetics of art and aesthetic of pleasure seeking, that for the understanding of aesthetic experience to occur one requires an understanding of the difference within the elements of aesthetic experience.<sup>181</sup> Art as an experience is related in some context towards the belief that harmony will bring about a reward and as such, things that are aesthetically pleasing will be considered to incorporate forms of artistic creation/perfection. In such a case, artistic perfection or aesthetically pleasing imagery is a development of the need to attain some form of visual pleasure. The need to attain some form of visible pleasure was developed within prehistoric humans. The function of the tools was to be tools, while as the humanoid progressed, the aesthetic properties of the tool became as important as the tool itself.<sup>182</sup> (This is still visible in some tribal societies, the creation of such tools holds very specific constraints, and people of these tribes are still able to detect the creators of these tools/objects, through specific aesthetic properties.<sup>183</sup>)

The development of attempting to create aesthetically pleasing objects becomes the basis for capturing certain imagery, which are following a particular structure. Such structures are supposed to create a pleasing sensation or are rather aesthetically pleasing. Within pictures the placement of objects, light sources etc. can determine

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>183</sup> The discussion surrounding whether art has a possibility to exist within a societies, the outcome is often that; for art to be in existence a *prior* (something that is above the general aesthetic quality of objects) needs to be in existence within such a society. Once such a *prior* is visible it can be used to advocate the statues of art onto other society who may not have reached such a conclusion or understanding. The example of recognition is that the recognition is of the person who made the tools craftsmen ship and aesthetic application; this does not make the work entirely a meaningfully artwork.

David Novitz, "Art By Another Name," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 38, No1 (January, 1998): 19-32, <http://bjaesthetics.oxfordjournals.org/content/38/1/19.full.pdf> (accessed June 6, 2012).

the viewing of such picture, creating the ideal aesthetic pleasure. One such element is the 3:5 ratio within the picture. By placing objects in accordance to the ratio one sees the images as more balanced than without that ratio. There is however the appearance of too much of aesthetic balance in such way the object becomes distorted or too perfect, creating a feeling of falseness. Relating back to evolutionary development, we are prone to maintain or construct a specific idealisation of ourselves, however within nature the visible perfect ratio is not as clear, and as such a person is depended on visible imperfection within objects. There is no such thing as a perfect apple, tree or seashell, even though there is a pattern to the construction the pattern—Fibonacci sequence—a person is able to detect a fake very easily. A person who has had too much plastic surgery stands out to be false looking. The appearance of falseness shows the evolutionary presences within us as an aesthetic means. Grinde makes the following point:

*We are specialists in non-specializing. We are stimulus-hungry and have an inclination to gather all sorts of information from our surroundings. Obtaining information is important for survival. It is necessary to observe details in order to find our way in the forest, to notice signs indicating sources of food, to recognize faces, etc.*<sup>184</sup>

From the above observation the idea that as human beings we observe and collect information as an active part of our existence in order to attain specific goals, pleasures, and understanding of our surroundings. The development of a decorative addition to tools, or our bodies etc. are consistent with the need to experience and consume information. In this case the need of an aesthetic pleasure is part of the evolutionary process, and can explain why certain parts of modern life exist and has stayed within such a strong context. (The reason why Television is so predominant, why the appearance of advertisement, specific architectural and visible structures within the cityscape is in existence. Reason for why some people might see the

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<sup>184</sup> Grinde., 34.

prospect of living in English grey concrete housing estates; or, eastern European/Russian/Communist cities with their lack of colour, stimulating signs etc. as a bleak and boring prospect.) It is through the need to attain an aesthetic experience of pleasure via a stimulus; this stimulus is one that creates the basis of reward and interest within a person. People tend to strive for things that hold a property of harmony or a relation to our own surroundings. This is why when observing things that appear to be perfect or false will remove the interest of the viewer. Due to the fact that the reward is no longer applicable, there is nothing to explore within the aesthetic properties of the object/image. Grinde makes the point that we find things that are complex in structure interesting to some degree, if the complexity becomes too much or too overwhelming then it becomes too intensive to be enjoyed.<sup>185</sup>

Within primates—not just humans—the need to create things with an aesthetic sense is visible as a form of enjoyment. Grinde provides an example mentioned in Desmond Morris', *The Human Animal*,<sup>186</sup> of a chimpanzee who engaged and showed a fondness of painting pictures. The chimpanzee preferred pictures that were more symmetrical with a preference of colours such as red.<sup>187</sup> The chimpanzee did not create works of *Fine Art*, the creation of the pictures were in relation to the animal's evolutionary development. The chimpanzee created images because the specific parts of the images were offering some form of aesthetic reward. Once humans gained a notion of self-awareness, and the ability to create more complex systems of interaction, via communicative and social, the possibility for the creation of more complex composition amongst artistic practice is possible. The creation no longer is reliant on the pure aesthetic need of pleasurable balance and symmetry in shapes and colours. However there are still people of view that artistic work should still hold this form of balance and in somewhat aesthetically pleasing.

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 34-35.

<sup>186</sup> A nature documentary that was written and presented by Desmond Morris, for the BBC.

<sup>187</sup> Grinde., 38.

The same can be observed when engaging in the experience of art, whereby the experience though being aesthetic does not have to follow the belief of the hedonistic school of thought. (Arts function is to create visual pleasure.) Observing art through an evolutionary approach we can see that the need to gain some sort of reward within ourselves becomes predominant. We are attempting to be individuals within a group to gain some form of pleasure. As within things such as movies, the pleasure given by the artwork does not have to be one that is positive. Observing an artwork that produces displeasure is still producing a form of satisfaction in a broader sense, fulfilling the need of attaining a form of pleasure within us. The difference between the attainment of pleasure through imagery thereby defining such image as art compared to a pleasing image. Grinde's assertion brings up such an alternative position of art, in accordance with Kathryn Coe<sup>188</sup>, that aesthetic of art is to bring forth attention to the artwork/object being classified as art, allowing for our attention to be involved within the artwork/object. This will create a sensation of some sort that allows the reward factor to occur within ourselves.<sup>189</sup> In contrast to a nude picture of a man/women for erotic pleasure whereby the pleasure is a direct sensory intended pleasure—similar to that of a visual stimulus within some city landscape (advertisement)—the image provides pleasure on a very fundamental and simplistic level.<sup>190</sup> Art's function is to create a more deepening and rewarding experience.

*The rewards offered by the brain may be considered to be a main currency for the quality of life. Indulgence in art (as most other diversions) is an ability that needs to be cultured in order to obtain maximal rewards. It therefore makes sense to encourage our capacity for aesthetic enjoyment. Rewards are obtained either by producing art, viewing the work of others, or utilizing natural stimuli.*

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<sup>188</sup> Kathryn Coe, "Art: The replicable unit—An inquiry into the possible origin of art as a social behaviour," *Journal of Social and Evolutionary Systems*, Vol. 15, Issue 2 (1992): 217-234, doi:10.1016/61-7361(92)90005-X (accessed January 11, 2013).

<sup>189</sup> Grinde., 37-38.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 38.

*Exactly what you find attractive is less important than learning to enjoy whatever sights that elicit rewards.*<sup>191</sup>

## **5. Fine Art through evolutionary aesthetic.**

The development of the *Fine Art* in relation to evolutionary aesthetic comes from the need to engage and experience an aesthetic surrounding to fulfil the need of a reward within oneself. The reward brings about a more heightened experience. This is something that often has been used within religious orders; the decoration of their place of worship or heightened visual act as a way to produce a more engaging religious experience during the ceremonies. This will bring the person closer to the experience of the worship creating a much stronger belief within the religious sect. There is a visible relationship between religious and spiritual experience and aesthetic properties of images, objects and structures. The involvement enhances the religious/spiritual experience of the participants. In relation to the development of *Fine Art*, as something that is above the creation of human experience, religious development within the Western world has travelled alongside the development of the subject matter within *Fine Art*. The Catholic Church involvement and investment into the development of artistic paintings through the centuries, the development of altarpieces or icon painting, etc. developed the aesthetic structure to follow within the West. There is a distinction here to be made. As have been discussed previously the advancement of art and the creation of things with a specific aesthetic property would most likely have occurred without any religious influence due to cultural diversity. In the case of Europe, the Church allowed for the development of individuals to emerge, and challenge specific positions within the social structure, creating the environment for the development of the “*artist*” as an individual to emerge. The idea of *Fine Art* has come for some to represent something that is rare, something that will bring about an understanding of enlightenment or bettering within the viewer. It is something that a few people do in order to either satisfy a

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 37.

large mass of people's need of enlightenment or the few who are pursuing the observation of art. We can in some sense see, and deduce that in most cases, the arts or Fine Art, plays a very minuet role in the lives of ordinary peoples. One of the reason for this is that within today's society most people are satisfied with the amount of stimulus or experience they are having, as such the experience of something being art or Fine Art becomes less need or reduced to just another experience.

It is clear that through our evolutionary process we as a species developed a need to decorate or communicate something in order to gain a form of reward. The making of my art or to make art is part of this reward mechanism. When I take an active role in producing something this production is part of giving me some form of pleasure and/or some form of knowledge. In a way this is problematic when I am relating my own practice to contemporary art, as the outcome of being driven to make something, will not produce works that are uncouthly satisfying for some viewers. In many cases the attainment of aesthetically pleasing constructions within my work is often produced or taken over when the activity of painting is conducted. In this case a relation back to primates can be made. Now it is clear that the difference between me and other primates or a person who is just dabbling with the practice for say in painting, is present by the relationship with the developed artistic theory of what art is, and developed neurological functions.

The development of neuroaesthetics and my observation of this area of research, is to provide the evidence for why art, when viewed in some case by people, has an effect. If we are to agree on certain things such as a belief in that art has a transient power—I do not believe this—then what I will provided in the neuroaesthetic observation and combined with things such as the biological overview of an aesthetic experience, cannot holy be true. In these cases art should hold a place that stands above the presented examples, art does appear to have a place within our neurological experience, in a different place of the brain, this is true; but the experience is still restrained depending on the person having it, not everyone has



the same experience, the experience will differ but the active neurological data shows an region to be active for most people.

# Aesthetics.

## 1. A definition and usage of the word.

Aesthetics:

1. *a: of relating to, or dealing with aesthetics or the beautiful <aesthetic theories>  
b: Artistic <a work of aesthetic value>  
c: pleasing in appearance: attractive*
2. *: appreciative of, responsive to, or zealous about the beautiful; also: responsive to or appreciative of what is pleasurable to the sense.<sup>192</sup>*

Aesthetic judgment:

1. *The ascription of an aesthetic property or value to an object, as distinguished from cognitive or logical judgment that gives us knowledge.<sup>193</sup>*
2. *Judgments of aesthetic value rely on our ability to discriminate at a sensory level. Aesthetics examines our affective domain response to an object or phenomenon.<sup>194</sup>*

Aesthetic experience:

The aesthetic experience can be divided into different features that are similar but unrelated, as explained on the Stanford website. A more common assumption is that any aesthetic experience is an experience relating to the sensory perception in a relation to agreeableness.

*Theories of aesthetic experience may be divided into two kinds according to the kind of feature appealed to in explanation of what makes experience aesthetic.*

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<sup>192</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/aesthetic> (accessed October 22, 2012).

<sup>193</sup> [http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9781405106795\\_chunk\\_g97814051067952\\_ss1-65](http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9781405106795_chunk_g97814051067952_ss1-65) (accessed December 17).

<sup>194</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics#Aesthetic\\_judgment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics#Aesthetic_judgment) (accessed December 17, 2012).

*(Internalist) theories appeal to features internal to experience, typically to phenomenological features, whereas externalist theories appeal to feature external to the experience, typically to features of the object experienced.* <sup>195</sup>

Etymological of aesthetic:

1. 1798, from German *Ästhetisch* or French *esthétique*, both from Greek *aisthetikos* "sensitive, perceptive," from *aisthanesthai* "to perceive (by the senses or by the mind), to feel," from PIE *\*awis-dh-yo-*, from root *\*au-* "to perceive". <sup>196</sup>

In the context of the Merriam Webster definition of aesthetics relates more towards a perception concerning beauty, while if one is specific about the meaning or in a philosophical study of aesthetics, the view is that it is a study of sensory experience, judgment/taste. I think this is an important thing to bring up, due to the fact that aesthetics when often referred to within a culture application is often linked with this idea of beauty or something that is pleasing to us.

By observing the word aesthetics in relation to art is one that is developed through the origins or appreciation of beauty within the world; the developing nature of art within the Western Canon combined with the annotation that aesthetics is a development of art towards the appreciation of beauty. An example can be seen with the observation of specific people and their relation to people some might consider being ugly while others sees them as beautiful. The beauty in these cases though not conventional magazine beauty, is one the can be described as enlightenment or improvement. The person's other characteristics allow for them to be viewed as beautiful. In this case the aesthetic experience as a model, perceived by

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<sup>195</sup> <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aesthetic-concept/#AesExp> (accessed December 17, 2012).

<sup>196</sup> <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=aesthetic> (accessed December 17, 2012).

some, does not hold up. If the intention of an aesthetic experience, i.e. an artwork to attain some form of beauty or perceived beauty within e.g. realistic or romantic painting, then the person being perceived as beautiful through a non-aesthetical manner cannot be true. A person (A) is observing person (B) whom has a disfigurement. Person (A) in this case would in some way attempt to see the inner beauty of person (B) through a medium of praising person (B) for their ability to outshine the norm and adhere to their inner beauty, allowing for person (A) to find some form of beauty within person (B).<sup>197</sup> The same person would in some cases argue fiercely that a specific art work is not art due to its lack of the ideal set of rules or as they assume, the rightful qualities of art and hence claiming it as an aesthetic argument. Therefore the Merriam-Webster online dictionary definition of aesthetics is somewhat problematic when it comes to using it as a descriptive word. By assuming this problem of defining the word the outcome of viewing is dependent on such an understanding. Referring back to freedom as a practice based topic through the creation of artistic works, the reasoning for developing a strong or more defined usage of aesthetic is needed.

Beauty in this situation can be used to demonstrate how to assume or conform to one specific belief in one aspect of our life, while at the same time project a completely different position in another. One example would be the notion of classical beauty in relation to physical appearance of people. My ability to see past these standards when observing real people gives me a sense of freedom/well being. This sense of self-belief can be used for accepting or justifying when harsher restriction are applied towards things such as what art is, or what constitutes to be artistic practice compared to hobby etc. by the same person.

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<sup>197</sup> This is often observed within children's stories and movies. Whereby the main character—who often is female—is placed within a situation where they need to see past the exterior and see the interior beauty of their counterpart. One example would be the Beauty and the Beast.

Now if we assume that there can be some truth within the above argument, then there is a visible problem within the dealing of an aesthetic experience and its relation to artistic practice and artistic observation. We can view it as a characteristic of dealing with the visual properties of art and let it fail when more complex artworks emerge removing the aesthetics from these works and focusing on the theoretical position they raise by concentrating on either the social observation, philosophical arguments etc. made by the artists within their works. In this case the aesthetic of art becomes somewhat induced into a stale state, one does not deal with the act of viewing but rather a scale of what is aesthetically pleasing or displeasing. Within this case the argument can be projected towards dealing with sensory pleasure, as such anything we create (paintings, photographs, objects, sculptures) are individually judged, not as a collective. We could argue that such a notion creates a fallacy because the experience one is having is in relation to one's knowledge and as such each work viewed will be viewed in relation to the other surrounding works, either consciously or subconsciously.

A person's knowledge defines the aesthetic judgment made in accordance to the experience they are having. What is visible is the interrelationship between knowledge and experience when concerning things such as aesthetic experience; an intertwining overview of past experiences and images. A good example would be the active participation of taking an exam, a process that determines one's ability to recall past information from memory. However the experience of the exam determines how much one is able to recall at that moment. For a different example relating to knowledge and perception/aesthetic experience, we can create a thought experiment along the following lines:

A painting of a horse will be shown to a person whom has lived within a culture where images do not exist or have been banned completely (specific religious sects follow this form of strict practice). We then ask the participant to acknowledge the presences of a horse within the image, one conclusion that can be drawn based on the following premise would be that the person

who is observing the horse, since not having the knowledge of understanding images cannot recognise the picture of a horse, as a horse.

How does one draw such a conclusion, well if the person who has no knowledge or understanding of imagery, then the picture of a horse is just a collection of shapes and colours on a flat surface. The person's knowledge of a horse is that of an animal, one that has specific attributes to it and like the person have a presences within the space. The person can walk around the horse and see all its different parts. Whiles the image of a horse is fundamentally stuck on a 2D space, therefore removes the possibility of moving around the horse, allowing for the conclusion to be drawn that they are not seeing a horse.

In the case of the horse, the aesthetic experience will have several different implications and outcomes. One can argue that the person, who does not recognise the horse, is still seeing a horse. Whether or not the person agrees is irrelevant. The horse is there and therefore it is a horse. All one really needs to do is to activate their ability to recognise the horse within the picture through semiotic education. On the other hand, the recognition that a person cannot recognise the horse portrays the wider range or diversity that aesthetic experiences can take. We can develop a problem when observing this situation, since the assumption generally goes, that when a person is perceiving something or experiencing something, they will initially, or on a fundamental level have the same experiences as another, be it they are either used to it or not. By making the observation of an exam as an example I will demonstrate this problem.

- I. A person is taking an exam but have no understanding of what an exam is but has a deep knowledge of the subject the exam is based around.
- II. A person is taking an exam but has no understanding of what an exam is and has no knowledge of the subject the exam is based around.

In premise I, the person would possibly find the exam an enjoyable experience, since it is just a time period where they are able to discuss things they have a deep knowledge of and as such the exam condition would be favourable for such a person. Premise II, on the other hand can be argued to be a less enjoyable experience, since the person has no knowledge of the event occurring, the exam, they will only experience sitting in a quiet room with a piece of paper in front of them. Their experience will be related to how they deal with being quiet and stationary for a period of time. Similar to the observation of the horse the amount of knowledge a person has will relate and have some form of effect on the outcome of their experience and thus there is a reason to include it within the text and argument surrounding the aesthetic experience.

We can now see that the usage of aesthetics and a handling of such a subject matter affect the outcome of specific ideas or assumptions based around our experience or viewing. This is one of the reasons for choosing to cover Carlson and Kant in such an in-depth way, by doing so this understanding that the usage of aesthetics and how we experience things became more clear for me as an observer. The clear link between our understanding of artistic practice and artistic works in relation to such works placement helps to develop and explain our experience of art and the everyday. Though this is on such a limited scale that the observation of aesthetic is still needed. From such a point I will be able to provide the evidence to construct the option of confirming that my method of artistic practice is a legitimate form of work, but also it demonstrates how the observation of art and the practice of art should be limited to what I showed as being an elitist practice in forms.

## **2. The aesthetic experience: beginning with a problem.**

What is an aesthetic experience? Are we capable of having an aesthetic experience only when we observe art? Can everyday experiences be called aesthetic experience, some theorists believe so and therefore what is the difference between the experience of observation of the everyday and that of art? Do we have an

aesthetic experience when we dream, or are aesthetic experiences only associated with a sensory stimulus? The aesthetic experience differs from that of an aesthetic judgment and aesthetic observation, however there is a link between our senses and aesthetic judgment.<sup>198</sup>

The impact of Kant on the observation of aesthetic theory in a contemporary context is fairly visible. When relating to the observation and experience of art and that of modern art and onwards, the aesthetic theories proposed are a diversion from that of Kant, as many of these attempt to deal with the experience of viewing art, rather than what constitutes as being art. Differences within aesthetic theory can be seen in people such as Arthur Danto focus on interpretation, or Nelson Goodman observation of aesthetic experience as a cognitive response.<sup>199</sup> These notion or theories still surrounds artistic thought. Since the change of art after modernism, the aesthetic field has attempted to figure out a theory for such an artistic aesthetic experience, in the hope to be able to form an analysis of artistic value and complement a theory or definition of art.<sup>200</sup>

We can begin by deriving an observation from the origins of aesthetics or the approaches that define the treatment of the study of aesthetics, taken from Carroll's *Aesthetic Experience Revisited*.<sup>201</sup>

*Affect-oriented approach: Attempts to find a specific property that determines the aesthetic experiences. Pleasure/ enjoyment.*

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<sup>198</sup> Sherri Irvin, "Scratching an Itch," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 66, No.1 (Winter, 2008):25, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1540-594X.2008.00285.x/asset/j.1540-594X.2008.00285.x.pdf?v=1&t=hgpgikz4&s=d77be0d52d2d68221e5e32f5ab22637b65923837> (accessed June 28, 2012).

<sup>199</sup> Noël Carroll, "Aesthetic Experience Revisited," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 42, No2 April (2002): 145, doi:10.1093/bjaesthetics/42.2.145 (accessed June 28, 2012).

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid. 145-168.



*Axiologically-oriented approach: Aesthetic experience is an experience that can be valued by its self or rather for its individual purpose.*

*Content-oriented approach: Aesthetic experiences are derived from objects that cause a judgment to be made be it positive or negative as well as a pleasure or displeasure.<sup>202</sup>*

For these categories the aesthetic experience relies on an external interaction to initiate the experience. These observations are often in relation to what is occurring after or during the interaction within an outside stimulus. What things are happening internally to allow for us to acknowledge and recognise specific things, and how are these related to specific states of mind or a physical reaction. Things are pleasurable because they are aesthetically pleasing, or their purposiveness is that to please etc. The problem with these is that they are limited in the amount of descriptive possibilities allowing for a better acknowledgment of an aesthetic experience that occur outside of these boundaries. It becomes difficult to allow for the aesthetic experiences of daily life to fit into these categories. One can take pleasure from things that are not objects. An experience can be intensive even though one would see it as a low aesthetic experience since the experience does not uphold to a specific purpose. Definition of properties for the cause of an aesthetic experience is to open for interpretation and is more based around judgment and taste. How does one explain the aesthetic experience of waving ones hand in a non-linear pattern? Where does the property of such an experience lie to make it an aesthetic experience? In this case if the property does not exist then the experience will be defined as non-aesthetic.

Considering that an aesthetic experience has different theoretical presumptions, to describe what such an experience is, and how it can be defined. The experience one

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 146.

is having will be affected by one's aesthetic beliefs. Due to the fact that an aesthetic experience does come from our sensory system in part, an aesthetic belief will affect such an experience.<sup>203</sup> A metaphysical property can therefore be observed in different ways.

To give an example: observing the colours green and blue. For some the colours green and blue will drive an aesthetic experience that is related to their sensory construction within the eye, producing an aesthetic experience that creates a specific form of belief in relation to the colours green and blue, allowing for the differentiation between the colours. One who is colour-blind will not be able to do such a differentiation, creating a different sort of aesthetic experience. In this case one could argue that the colour-blind person did not have a full aesthetic experience. Our experiences of things are dependent on our developed aesthetic belief systems. One can extend the example to the observation of differentiation of colour contrasts within two colours. The person who is not colour-blind would therefore see two colours, therefore not have the appropriate aesthetic experience, or would not be capable of making the appropriate aesthetic judgment, this is due to the fact that a person who is colour blind for the two given colours would only recognise a difference in tonal qualities of the colours chosen. It would be easy to argue that due to the colour-blind person having damage within cones in their retina that causes a diminished ability to observe colours they are incapable of making the judgment or having the correct aesthetic experience. Countering to such a statement, a simplistic argument can be made.

Premise 1: Blue holds the property of blueness.

Premise 2: Green can be observed as being blue. (If and only if one is observing through specific conditions.)

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<sup>203</sup> Derek Matravers, "Aesthetic Concepts and Aesthetic Experiences," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol.36, No. 3 (July, 1996): 269, doi:10.1093/bjaesthetics/43.4.412 (accessed June 6, 2012).

Conclusion: Green holds the property of blueness. (If the specific conditions are upheld and are true.)

This case provides grounding for interpretation of what aesthetic properties are, if one would refer back to the list above, affect-oriented approaches to aesthetic experience proposes that of properties. The above premise shows that under certain circumstances, a metaphysical belief or understanding can make a physical property possess more than one observable property.<sup>204</sup> Objects will always possess more than one property, such as a flower not just hold a property of a flower, but things such as, colour, texture etc. Property of an object and its relation to an aesthetic experience does therefore not function as well as some might argue, and as one observes more of the traditional views on aesthetic experience it becomes clear that they are more about the definition of what constitutes an aesthetic experience with a set of boundaries.

### 3. Emotion.

*Stendhal syndrome,<sup>205</sup> should one attempt to experience this state for every time an aesthetic experience occurs? Clear answer is no. Nor can one experience such a syndrome on a day-to-day basis., It is clear that such a thing is anything but ludicrous. However, the expectation that emotions are part of an aesthetic experience is very high. Stendhal syndrome is not an emotional state, rather a physical effect. The effects of emotions on aesthetic experience are more closely related to artistic observations and experiences.*

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<sup>204</sup> The counter argument would be that because the colour-blind person cannot observe the property of greenness, but only blueness, the above notion is false. The fact though is that the property of blueness is being observed as an authentic cognitive experience. This can also link in with how each person will see different things in relation to their knowledge and genetic background.

<sup>205</sup> An overwhelming experience observing a large amount of beautiful art within a single space, or a natural occurrences that is overwhelmingly beautiful, e.g. the double Rainbow video on the Internet where a man is experience the syndrome, or the movie *Stendhal syndrome*, where the protagonist is visiting Italy and sees to much art creating the Stendhal syndrome to occur.

An aesthetic experience can be expressed as a perfection of sensory cognition, the position being, a pleasurable experience can be achieved through the harmonies of artistic creation or the natural world.<sup>206</sup> This will refer back to Kant's as an origin of the connection between emotion and an aesthetic experience. In this case the experiences of something that is beautiful or has a property of harmony brings about an emotional experience by the viewer. In these experience lay the judgment that is made in accordance whether things are agreeable etc.<sup>207</sup> When an observer is having an experience that brings about an emotional state, such emotions will either be positively or negatively in the most simplistic form. For Kant it was through a combination of experience and the emotional state that allowed for the creation of a place whereby the emotions could be placed under a higher scrutiny. This state became the idea of an aesthetic experience. In a way it is this transformation between the experience and one's emotions that cause the reasoning for why some people see different experience as an aesthetic experience and a non-aesthetic experience. This is the problem in relation to art. If one is having an experience that is not an emotionally charged experience when viewing a work of art, then should that work not be considered to be art due to the fact it did not produce an aesthetic experience. The experience one is having cannot solely be based on emotions in relation to a stimulus.

Forming the belief, the more intuitive or capable a person is with grasping the meaning and adapting to artworks/objects, the more such a person can enjoy and achieve a higher state of pleasure.<sup>208</sup> It is not a pleasure derived from a pleasing harmony but one from the knowledge gained as a cognitive transformation and emotional understanding. In regards to this assumption one should observe the factuality of beauty—not inherently a part of harmony—due to the exemplification

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<sup>206</sup>M. Pelowski and F. Akiba, "A Model of Art perception evolution and Emotion in Transformative aesthetic Experience," *New Ideas in Psychology*, Vol. 29 (2011): 81, doi:10.1016/j.newideapsych.2010.04.001 (accessed June 30, 2012).

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., 82.

of differences between what harmony and beauty is. There should be an understanding that when one believes an artwork to be beautiful can in fact be an observation of pure harmonic or rather mathematical harmony within a subject matter.

(Artistic judgment, within today's contemporary context is regarded to hold more than an attachment to the beautiful.<sup>209</sup> A move away from the need to observe beauty and the creation of more diversifying application of artistic works has occurred and is present. What is to be considered beautiful in today's society is no longer simple. This has in some form changed what beauty is and how we perceive beauty within today's society. Beauty has only become a tool to describe things, which are agreeable.)

#### **4. Beauty.**

The notion of beauty is a problem that should be observed when considering the aesthetic experience in relation to art, due to its implicit nature, and correlation between aesthetics reasoning, and artistic practice. Beauty has served as a means to enlighten people towards something greater. Platonic understanding of a beautiful ideal within beautiful objects lays the property of beauty, mainly within the properties of mathematics and geometry. (The example here is the Golden Ratio that many believed to be an ideal construction, however as seen from research by George Markowsky, this is not entirely true.<sup>210</sup> The Golden Ratio does not function

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<sup>209</sup> Introduction of modernism, thought one should be aware that artist before this period worked on things that did not follow the current canon during their time. There has always been artists who have focused on things that were ugly or disagreeable, the assumption that art is or rather was in search of beauty before modernism, is massively flawed and only provided the observers lack of knowledge within the development of art.

<sup>210</sup> George Markowsky, "Misconceptions about the Golden Ratio," *The College Mathematics Journal*. Vol.23, No. 1 (January, 1992): 2-19, <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2686193?uid=25934&uid=3737976&uid=2&uid=5910312&uid=3&uid=25933&uid=67&uid=62&sid=21102217251771> (accessed, June, 30).

as a validation of aesthetic beauty, though the test showed a preferences within a range of values of aesthetic appreciation of beauty fitting within the Golden Ratio. In form this follows up on the observable conceived notion of beauty within people or objects/ nature.) Another property of beauty as interpreted by Plato is Eros (love).

Eros function is to create a form of beauty as a concept of why one perceives things as beautiful in a relation to a system of order; what things are beautiful in relation to others and where the highest form of beauty lies? Eros as such holds the relation to love as an observation of the beauty of a human body and face, moving on to an appreciation of all things beautiful, Eros function as a connection between the observations of beauty, a training mechanism to be able to reach the full understanding of beauty.<sup>211</sup> In a sense to understand beauty there is a need to understand how such an understanding of greater knowledge and a better appreciation of external beauty. The concept of beauty is one of the identifications of knowledge until one reaches some form of external understanding of beauty. Beauty therefore in the Platonic sense is not something that is similar to the contemporary notion of beauty, it is something one finds and discovers and does not search for. In form this has however changed and become something that one is meant to desire, relish and need, a form of enforced beauty and aesthetic ideal that function to bring forth an opinion. Clearly one should consider beauty as a part of the aesthetic experience, though not as an interlay in the formulaic and standardised notion of beauty.

It is clear that through the development of modernism, beauty as a part of the aesthetic experience, changed. It once was something that a person would desire to

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The article points out some of the mistakes made over the years concerning the Golden Ratio. It was used within ancient culture and examples where it had been misused are within the Parthenon, as well as by artists within their works.

<sup>211</sup> We can understand that for many the idea of beauty stops at the human form, or rather this idea that to observe something real and create something beautiful it relies on the classical observation of the human form. This is clearly a misinterpretation of what beauty can be.

obtain though not as a physical form or object.<sup>212</sup> One that allowed for advancement within a person to strive towards something better or achieve a deepened understanding. In the current model of beauty, beauty acts as a pure sensory perception conforming towards, though not exclusively, Freudian attainment of desire and eroticism.<sup>213</sup> Freudian concepts of desire help to develop a change in the observation and understanding of beauty, not as a thing, which can transport a person, but something that holds an element of desire. Something that is needed and observed for the gratification of erotic pleasure; <sup>214</sup> a more simplistic observation would be the differences between *like* and *want*.<sup>215</sup>

Beauty therefore moves towards a point of indifference in its readings and handlings. It becomes a subject matter not related to aesthetics, but more to cultural effects and observation of moral and ethical views. Beauty can be viewed to be an elitist spectacle, often related back towards the classicism observed within the arts, a position that should be counteracted and whereby the problem of understanding beauty lies.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Carolyn Korsmeyer, "What Beauty Promises: Reflections on Alexander Nehamas, Only a Promise of Happiness: The Place of Beauty in a World of Art," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (April 2010): 193, doi:10.1093/aesthj/ayq002 (accessed July 3, 2012).

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>214</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," *The Freud Reader*, ed. Peter Gay (London: Vintage Books, 1995), 239-293.

These essays explain about human sexuality, but the point that is address is that eroticism and fetishism etc. as proposed by Freud, became reasoning for the change in the theory of beauty as being something that is wanted.

<sup>215</sup> *Like* and *want* plays an important part in the development of humans. One can like objects, food etc. The *like* is something one enjoys but does not crave such as enjoying certain kinds of food. Whiles the *want* factor, is often something that has a function of craving or need, something that can be observed within drug abuse as well as in modern day advertisement where in some case the *want* part of a person overpowers the *like*. This does also exist within food, when food becomes a *want* through overconsumption.

<sup>216</sup> The link between cultural elitism and beauty is somewhat hypothetical, though the idea of elitism and snobbery can be observed within the use of beauty.

Example 1: If one sees beauty as an elitist adaptation of the classics as a form of cultural significance, and thereby an old fashion product, then the idea of beauty has no real significant link with aesthetic and thereby an aesthetic experience. Beauty is an universal ideal that does no change and only serves specific forms.

The problem with this is that one can always say that something is beautiful because it has a specific shape or rendering. However the judgment made is not based on the idea of beauty but rather an opinion. A concept can be beautiful, so can a car engine for a mechanic or engineer.

Example 2: Beauty is a function of aesthetic that is not a universal ideal but works to enlighten, engage and bring something out of people towards either a specific subject matter or pleasure.

Here beauty is going back to a Platonic observation to a certain extent. Beauty therefore is not based on an ideal but on the individual's judgment of beauty. Carolyn Korsmeyer observes, "*beauty awakens desire and prompts efforts to learn about that which we love- including artworks and other people*".<sup>217</sup> If so then one cannot argue that beauty holds one specific ideal or form. For as to get people interested or experience a desire towards something then their needs for such desire must be satisfied, one that is dictated by that persons genetics and upbringing. We can interpret things to be beautiful in most cases these are individual interoperations that we are experiencing when observing specific objects or properties within objects. Most cases these properties deal with harmony. Now this ideal of harmonies and aesthetically pleasing things cannot be considered to hold the notion or idea as being beauty in a philosophical sense.

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<sup>217</sup> Korsmeyer., 193.



#### **4. a) Why beauty still matters within the arts (brief side note on the topic of beauty in relation to creating politically/socially relevant artworks.)**

Beauty is often observed to hold a strong relation to the creation of specific artistic works. For most of the development of the Western arts, the relation between art and beauty was to reflect the beautiful. It becomes a definition of great art; *great art is beautiful; the masters make beautiful works*. Beauty is and can be used to bring fourth a message of importance, a form of reaction towards the notion that politically/socially challenging artworks cannot or should not hold the property of beauty. The works cannot be aesthetically pleasing; the reasoning behind this is often to do with the patronising or exploitation of the observed subject matter. We will not react and feel for things that are not tugging on our dislikes and show us things, which are confronting us. Hence a risk that the real issue is missed. We can observe such a pragmatism within images of the Ghettos and the Holocaust, and the treatment of the Jewish population during this time. Images are often associated with the horror of the events, whiles social everyday images of people having some form of happiness is often removed or disregarded. A better use is Tom Hunter's photographs dealing with the squatting community in London, prostitutes, travellers, etc. Hunter's approach towards the documentation of these people was through a need to document something more human, or beautiful, his images are often seen to embrace a quality of beauty.<sup>218</sup>

The clear problem when beauty or something that is deemed in a cultural way beautiful cannot be used in conjunction within hard hitting politically motivated art, which deals with hard subject matters. This type of art will often be viewed differently when beauty is used as a formal quality, or as stated by Vanina G  r  :

*...(P)olitical art is always threatened by the reverse problem: that the political*

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<sup>218</sup> Women Reading a Possession Order is a good example were the use of colour and lighting is similar to those of Dutch painters, such as Johannes Vermeer, and as such the beauty of the picture is bringing forth the experience in relation to the picture.

*message will not get through because of the work's retinal character— in other words, because the work is appreciated primarily for its formal qualities.*<sup>219</sup>

Beauty in relation to critical art requires a message to be conveyed however there could be a risk where the formulistic qualities of the work being beautiful will be considered more than the actual message. People tend to focus on the property of beauty, they want to find out why things are beautiful or find the experience of observing beauty as a meditative state. Observation of Jasper Johns' flag paintings can be such an example, whereby for some the aesthetic quality of the work overshadows the reading of the work. There are some who argue that the flag paintings are a reflection of the American cultural treatment of homosexuals during the time, linking with Johns' homosexuality, while Johns' own admission leans towards his understanding of people's knowledge of everyday imagery. The flag work in itself is a beautiful piece of art—or one can argue—that moves to develop a deeper connection within itself, more referable to John's white flag works.

The difficulty with the subject matter of beauty is one that has a transfixing quality, one that is often misused or misrepresented. However for qualities linked to making artistic statements, aesthetic experience, etc. the use of beauty will become more difficult, in comparison to everyday life where beauty is associated with pleasure, need and want.

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<sup>219</sup> Vanina Géré, "Artistic Beauty As A Political Weapon," *Contemporary Art from 1960 to 2010*, trans by Michael C. Behrent (December 6, 2012): 6, [http://www.booksandideas.net/IMG/pdf/20121206\\_beauty\\_as\\_a\\_weapon\\_ge\\_re\\_-2.pdf](http://www.booksandideas.net/IMG/pdf/20121206_beauty_as_a_weapon_ge_re_-2.pdf) (accessed February 12, 2013).

## 5. Aesthetic experience of everyday.

Kantian ideas brings forth that the differences between ones perception and ones opinion on things, the differences between agreeableness and beauty are in relation to that which is defined as pleasure and experience. If these are part of the aesthetic experience then one should be able to link such understanding to everyday-life creating an aesthetic experience of the everyday. To do so we need to distinguish between pleasure and experience.<sup>220</sup> These ideas are brought forward by Christopher Dowling within the essay *The aesthetics of Daily Life*, through an observation of Sherri Irvin in her essay, *Scratching an Itch*.<sup>221</sup> Irvin's discussion lay within the notion whether scratching an itch can be observed as an aesthetic experience. The experience of an itch and its apparent sensation of being itchy are based around one's opinion. Irvin argues that even the action of scratching an itch can on occasion be unconscious; if the action undertaken where either subconscious or unconscious interactions, then the outcome would be that of a pleasurable state. There is no experience that can be defined as an aesthetic experience, due to that the action being taken, is to satisfy the known outcome of the scratching of the itch (a sensation of pleasure). Pleasure of the scratching can be used as the basis for the argument that the scratching is an aesthetic experience. In such as, the pleasure experienced is one that most people will find universal. By scratching, I am achieving a form of pleasure, though not similar to the gratification of observing an artwork, having sex, or experience other agreeable things.

Difference between the everyday and observing an artwork is the relation to an event and an experience. Even if one observes an itch as an aesthetic experience, it is

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<sup>220</sup> Agreeableness being based around someone's own opinion while beauty being that of something universal.

<sup>221</sup> Sherri Irvin, "Scratching an Itch," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 66, No.1 (Winter, 2008): 25-35, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/j.1540-594X.2008.00285.x/asset/j.1540-594X.2008.00285.x.pdf?v=1&t=hgpgikz4&s=d77be0d52d2d68221e5e32f5ab22637b65923837> (accessed June 28, 2012).

an experience that is part of everyday life, without focusing in on a specific event most parts of everyday is rather mundane.<sup>222</sup> If one was to focus on each of these events, the aesthetics of everyday life will be more than that of any visit to a museum, or cultural event.<sup>223</sup> Taking pleasure in viewing out of your window during a morning sunrise and focusing on the colours and contemplating such an experience holds a difference from that of waking up and acknowledging the same sunrise the next day. Irving is referring to a subconscious acts. When sitting and attempting to analyse the everyday aesthetic experience, one is removing oneself from the actual experience. Focusing on the result of that experience becomes the mandated source. Aesthetics is still considered to be a study of beauty and a formulation of sensory experiences;<sup>224</sup> therefore its relation to the everyday has been placed within this type of context, the idea that an aesthetic experience only occurs when certain criteria's are satisfied.

The fact that a sunrise in the morning is a beautiful sight and a positive aesthetic experience is clear, though once such an experience is happening everyday unless one is strictly practicing something that involves the sunrise, the event can be seen as inconsequential. The sunrise, though a bad example—due to its relation to an environmental event—whiles scratching an itch is a private event, neither can be argued to possess a subjectivity of being an everyday event. If these two events should be considered as an aesthetic experience, then one way to observe this, is through the placement of a dialogue in relation to aesthetics and the aesthetic experience of art.

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<sup>222</sup> The everyday experience of life is a focus on things that are repeatedly done, such as getting dressed, brushing ones teeth etc. These are experiences but they occur so regularly that one stops focusing on them. It can apply as well to things such as going to work, traveling through a city etc.

<sup>223</sup> Kevin Melchionne, "Aesthetic Experience in Everyday Life: A Reply to Dowling," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 51. No. 4 (October 2011): 440, doi:10.1093/aesthj/ayr034 (accessed June 6, 2012).

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

The difficulty with accruing a possible notion for an aesthetic experience in everyday life is to distinguishing between the entire experience and the end of that experience.<sup>225</sup> As well as, differentiating between an aesthetic value and pleasure of an event, object or interaction that occurs during our daily lives.<sup>226</sup> Ostensibly Dowling's critique of Irvin is that she does not fully embrace one concept or fully follow-through with her arguments ending up with occasions where there is a misuse of specific words and their relations to the topic. One example made by Dowling is Irvin's treatment of the relationship between pleasure and the aesthetic experience.<sup>227</sup>

## **6. Aesthetic experience of art, or object (scientifically).**

What are the dissimilarities between an experience of everyday life compared with something such as that of artistic work and why is there a distinguishing difference between these two aesthetic experiences? Within the article *Viewing artworks: Contributions of cognitive control and perceptual facilitation to aesthetic experience*<sup>228</sup> Gerald C. Cupchik et al. points out that there is a difference between viewing everyday life and art due to our perception of objects is directed towards the identification of visual objects. We can perceive things within structures that hold no real structural shapes.<sup>229</sup> (This is the reason why we see objects in clouds, or Jesus on toast etc.) There is a difference when viewing art and everyday things as a part of an aesthetic experience. When one is viewing an object, one is programmed to view exact things within that object, or rather when viewing a scene or space we are able to see different things within that space. When viewing an artwork, the work in itself is determining the form of viewing, thereby removing

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<sup>225</sup> Christopher Dowling, "The Aesthetics of Daily Life," *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (June 6, 2012): 227, doi:10.1093/aesthj/ayq021 (accessed June 6, 2012).

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>228</sup> Gerald C. Cupchik, et al. "Viewing artworks: Contributions of cognitive control and perceptual facilitation to aesthetic experience," *Brain and Cognition*, Vol. 70(2009): 84-91, doi:10.1016/j.bandc.2009.01.003 (accessed August 14, 2012).

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 84.

a certain need to identify objects. Cupchik's et al. points out that the neural system involved with object recognition are not involved with that of certain kinds of aesthetic experiences.<sup>230</sup>

So what is the difference between the viewing of an object and an artwork? Since we observe in an order to identify objects, an artwork will already hold a property of an assumption that it is an artwork. In this case the observation is already based on a subject or property rather than the need to identify a property within the object. The difference only holds up when a person is identifying the observation as an *observation of an artwork*. If such, then as mentioned in Cupchik's et al. article there is an activity of information being processed such as "*perceptual analyses, implicit memory integration, explicit classification, cognitive mastering, evaluation*"<sup>231</sup>, within our systematic brain function. These parts are connected within stages that as well as function in order can loop-back on each other.<sup>232</sup> Through this process, the aesthetic experience of an artwork is occurring, however it can also happen during any form of aesthetic experience. In some cases it will allow for a person to distil the properties of the artwork and create the evaluation that are deemed to be the aesthetic judgment and aesthetic emotion, which are evaluated creating the aesthetic experience. The study by Cupchik's et al. provides the factuality of how one is observing an aesthetic experience from the rhetoric of scientific research.

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 85.

The modal for the aesthetic experience is taken from the article, Leder, H., et al. "A model of aesthetic appreciation and aesthetic judgements," *British Journal of Psychology*, 95, (2004). 489–508.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 85.

## 7. Discourse.

*In any case, critical discourse is a byproduct of aesthetic experience, not the point of it. We do not have aesthetic experiences in order to generate discourse.*<sup>233</sup>

Melchionne observation is one that is fatefully rendered for the purpose of discourse to the relation of aesthetic experience. The standardisation of the assessment is that of a simplistic view. Aesthetic experiences are clearly separated from the dialogue that can follow afterwards. Though such dialogue does not always enhance an aesthetic experience, or bring anything to it that can be useful for that specific experience. Melchionne points out that discourse may even damage or cause a change within the initial judgment of an aesthetic experience,<sup>234</sup> telling people what they should observe or feel at specific artworks, event, objects etc. Now it is clear that one should not exclude the point raised via Kantian observation that if such a discourse is affecting one's judgment, we have merely experienced something that is agreeable. It is not a true aesthetic experience due to change of the experience after the discourse. The aesthetic experience should hold up to some validity of an experience whiles the process of discourse is occurring.

Example 1: Going to the dentist, can be for many a negative experience. No matter what a dialogue surrounding the experience of going to the dentist it will still be a negative for that person. The experience of going to the dentist is one that holds an aesthetic value.

Example 2: An aesthetic experience can change if a discourse occurs after an observation of things such as an artwork, thereby changing the viewing of such work, causing a change in the experience one is having. This change is not a sensory

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<sup>233</sup> Melchionne., 441.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 441.

change, but more to do with the change in judgment as a part of the aesthetic experience.

Within example one, the discourse that follows the experience, will have little or no effect on that person future experiences of the dentist. Example two, shows in a very simplistic manner, the discourse that occurs during an observation of an artwork, though this does not exclusively apply for an artistic experience, viewing and experience of most things can undergo a similar change. The point being made is that a discourse can have an effect on one's viewing and it may change one's observation of an experience. The danger is to attempt to relate it towards the initial aesthetic experience. There can be a way around this problem, by initiating that an aesthetic experience is an unique experience within that moment. That experience is exclusive to its moment, and cannot be re-experienced or re-created. If such is the case then any aesthetic experience whereby a discourse follows such an experience, changes the state of the experience. It does not affect any future aesthetic experiences due to the fact that such experience have no relation to the first experience.

## **8. Neuroesthetics.**

Neuroaesthetics is an area of research that focuses on the observation of artworks through a scientific reasoning. The research that I want to observe and bring forth in relation to the rest of this text, has to do with how we—even though we have a set of artistic theories or philosophical understandings—have not yet reached a point where we can fully understand what is happening within our brains. The link between philosophy and science is becoming more closely bound as we explore these areas of study. In case there is a discovery or mapping of our selves as beings, then would such an occurrence therefore change our understanding or reasoning in relation to experience and art? Do we devalue specific experience, believes or theories if they are irrelevant? My own need to combine certain parts of



research, the visibility and adaptation of neuroaesthetics is towards a deeper understanding of art and how it relates to society today or in the future.

### **8. a) Art as a stimulus.**

A series of studies have been performed observing the effects of viewing beautiful and ugly images to determine which parts of the brain response to these stimuli. From most of these studies it is becoming clear that an aesthetically positive experience has an effect on what is referred to as the reward circuit in brain, which consists of:

- Ventral Striatum (VS)
- Medial Prefrontal Cortex
- Orbitofrontal Cortex (OFC)
- Amygdala
- Dopaminergic midbrain nuclei

These areas show up to be active during specific behavioural outcomes such as a situation when a person might be under a state of uncertainty,<sup>235</sup> demonstrating that the reward circuit does not exclusively function as a centre for administering rewards within a person. (This can be a link with how we have developed as humans through an evolutionary process. Reward is not just of pleasure but has a far more complex structure. Most parts of the brain are interrelating, and it is through this interrelation that one is experiencing and feeling. This is why the reward circuit fires off when a person is in a state of uncertainty or certainty etc.) Within some of the studies undertaken, the biggest focus has laid on the interpretation and relationship between art and beauty. The most observable activity comes when a person is observing an image they consider to be beautiful and the brain area that becomes highlighted is the orbitofrontal cortex. One example

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<sup>235</sup> Simon Lacey, et al. "Art for reward's sake: Visual art recruits the ventral striatum," *Neuroimage, NIH Public Access Author Manuscript*, Vol. 55, No.1 (March, 2011): 1-31, doi:10.1016/j.neuroimage.2010.11.027 (accessed June 27, 2012).

is the observation of buildings from a perspective of a person who holds knowledge of architecture. In this case their brain activity would show a different pattern within the orbitofrontal cortex to that of someone who is less experience or has less knowledge.<sup>236</sup>

In the article *Art for reward sake: visual art recruits the ventral striatum* a closer look at the specific of art is taken, with an attempt to find out whether these reactions are due to an aesthetic experience or relating to something deeper in art. (A point needs to be made about the research conducted in some cases, in relation to the images and artistic works observed by the participants. These are generally beauty based or artistic works that are considered to be artistically pleasing in a classical sense.<sup>237</sup> Even though some researchers have focused solely on specific art genres in an attempt to discover what part of the reward circuit was effected by specific artistic expressions the lack of overall engagement surrounding art combined with the relation of art to beauty makes some of these studies difficult to judge in relation to the aesthetic experience of art. Though the outcome many times showed an activation of the reward circuit, it does not define specific reasons why a person consider specific objects to be artistic whiles others are not. )

The reason for choosing to observe, *Art for reward sake: visual art recruits the ventral striatum*, is due to how the research was conducted. The article sets out to identify if there is a clear activation of the reward system when one is observing pictures containing a similar subject matter between art and non-art images. The result of the study and subsequent conclusion draws a point towards a relationship between the ventral striatum and the acceptance of art.<sup>238</sup> The activation that occurs within the ventral striatum is not the same as the activation when observing aesthetically pleasing objects therefore the observation of art and its effect on the

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., 13.

reward system is not related to a person's aesthetic preference.<sup>239</sup> The study points out that aesthetic preference "*is a complex phenomenon involving sensorimotor, cognitive and emotional processes*".<sup>240</sup> Even though a person might have scored the art images as being low on their aesthetic scale, they still showed activation within the ventral striatum to the image when identified as an art image. The brain has an area that is affected and shows some processing when a person is exposed to a notion of something being within the visual art. The brain is responding towards the notion of art for art sake—a point to make is that the test subjects had not had a formal art education—the brain is reacting to the art for being art, and not for any other reasons.<sup>241</sup>

If the study is partly true or holds up to scientific scrutiny the outcome does mean that whatever type of visual art one is observing, it will have a positive effect on that person. It does provide some evidence that some philosophical arguments towards a universal understanding do exist. We understand that it is art because of this reaction by our brains towards the observation. Now there is the reason that the effects is not due to any realisation or enlighten through the observation of the artwork, but rather a reward action of one's knowledge that one is observing something cultural and therefore it should be positive. The participants have some knowledge of what art is undoubtedly, and therefore when observing specific images that are somewhat artistic in nature this knowledge will present itself within the results as the activation within specific neurons. Studies have shown that single neurons activate to specific objects, names, images etc. The neuron would be active if the person was shown a picture of a celebrity or a thing, but not responded when the word or name of the celebrity or thing was mentioned.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>242</sup> R. Quirga Quiroga et al. "Invariant visual representation by single neurons in the human brain," *Nature*, Vol. 435, No. 23 (June, 2005): 1102-1107, doi:10.1038/nature03687 (accessed June 27, 2012).

## 8. b) Hypothesis:

If we consider the research surrounding neuroesthetic taking into account its implication relating to the development of neurons for the acknowledgment of art. Then a thought experiment can be created, where we make the observation of a artwork—no matter what one's opinion of what art is—a reaction within the neuron linked to art will happen, asserting that the artistic work is art.

For example: If one is a strict believer that realistic painting is the only true form of art and that those paintings should be observed at a gallery, the relation between a gallery space and art has developed. So once this person observes an artwork such as Carl Andre *Equivalent VIII*<sup>243</sup> within an institution such as Tate Modern the aesthetic judgment will be negative, however the neuron, which is dedicated to art, will be activated due to the notion: I am in a gallery (Tate Modern) and within a gallery space there is art. The acknowledgment within the brain that the work is art exist, while the conscious mind will make an aesthetic judgment, the judgment is in so far independent from the experience; though does occur simultaneously thereby creating the complexity of an experience, involving things such as emotions and moral deposition. The reaction by the person, being this is not art, this is crap etc. is therefore confirmation by them that what they are in fact viewing is art.

A person who does not consider a thing to be art should not have any reaction at all to an object that is defined as being art or of artistic worth. If there is no place for a neuron to be activated that confirms the state of art, a pile of bricks within a gallery space will only appear as a pile of bricks. Insofar as if one took a time-machine and travelled back to 1863, and placed *Equivalent VIII* in Salon des Refuses, the observation of these bricks would be that they were a pile of bricks that someone has left there as garbage. People of 1863 would not have the neurons allowing for the acknowledgment of the bricks within a gallery to be art.

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<sup>243</sup> Carl Andre, *Equivalent VIII*, Tate Modern, constructed 1966.

If we make the observation through a contemporary notion there is an understanding laid out by Luigi Francesco Aganti, surrounding how the designation of what art is and how art gains the statues known as art, this is known as the designation theory.<sup>244</sup>

*The theory states only that if an artist designates some object or event, 'artwork', then it is an artwork. It does not follow from this, however that his or her motivating theory about what counts as art must also be generally valid.*<sup>245</sup>

What this quote demonstrates is that when an artist designates the aspect or rather a semiotic placement of art onto anything, such things will instantly become recognisable as being an artistic creation. Though what is visible is that this aspect only works if the person who designates the proposition that it is an artwork has some reasonable or understanding of what art is, and is able to grasp this understanding into a functional theoretical position. Now if we apply this to the understanding of neuroaesthetics or rather an observation of neurons, the visibility of something being recognised as being art is visible. That is, when a person is viewing an artwork or something they have a knowledge of should be an artwork, or the work is in a space that is recognised to encompass art, then a neuron that exist to recognise *art* will be activated allowing for the acknowledgment of art to be made. In this case for a contemporary society the proposition would rely on, if a person with little or no artistic experience walks into an art happening, or some form of artistic practice within an abandon house or factory. It cannot be clear what their first experience or acknowledgement of the artistic happening or works would be. However it cannot be similar to that of seeing *Equivalent VIII* in an art gallery.

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<sup>244</sup> Paul Crowther, "Art, Knowledge and Historicity," *Nordisk Estetisk Tidskrift* Vol. 10 (1993): 34-70, <http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/nja/article/view/3222/2761> (accessed July 7, 2012).

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

### 8. c) Rebuttal:

The failure of the hypothesis lays within the lack of acknowledgement to the complexity of the human mind. We have the ability to work out complex and new ideas, thoughts and understandings. For example the ability of humans to be able to pick up a language through their development. As a child the access to language during day to day activity is limited to a certain amount of reference points, as such some people have made the assumption or proposition that for a person to be able to learn and understand the complexity of human language from this limited source, there needs to be something pre-placed within us.<sup>246</sup> In this case one can make a proposition that if one places something within a gallery or a place that has a relation to art and artistic works, then under any circumstance, even in the Salon de Refuses, it will be distinguished as a piece of art. This is due to a link between the placement of an object within a set context will create a knowledge of art. By using this observation and agree with it, we can create an application that can adhere this as an argument that humans have an implicated system that already is established to deal with an artistic notion or observation of art through any situation. We have the same construction of 'artistic' neurological system as those back in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore the placement of *Equivalent VIII* into the Salon de Refuses will be met with harsh observations and critics. The viewers would acknowledge the work as art (subconsciously) as the neuron within their head would fire off. This is impossible to prove and is purely based on an assumption. We can create another thought example. By imaging a person who has no experience of art a person who has a limited amount of artistic knowledge, who then walks into a experimental art event; this person will at first maybe not be able to understand the event or artistic work, eventually they will become able to understand that what they are

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<sup>246</sup> Lugi Francesco Agnati, "Does the human brain have unique genetically determined networks coding logical and ethical principles and aesthetics? From Plato to novel mirror networks," *Brain Research Reviews* Vol.55 (April 3, 2007): 70, doi:10.1016/j.brainresrev.2007.03.008 (accessed July 4, 2012).

observing/experiencing is artistic. In this case the person will have a reaction towards this experience and make a judgement.<sup>247</sup>

## **9. Analysis of the aesthetic experience.**

We experience something and instantly make some form of judgment based on the subconsciously or consciously experience. As such the next experience will not be entirely the same. For example the observation of a rose, if you have never seen a rose is something new and different. Once we see a rose again the aesthetic experience and judgment will be made instantly thereby creating a change every time we experience the rose. The judgment people make dependent on the beauty of the rose will be based primarily on the first observation of the rose, while the subsequent experience of the rose will be related back to the first experience. Some might find the rose a dull object, while others see the beauty in them, and it is through this continuing looping between the experience one is having in relation to the first experience that allows for these assertions to remain somewhat the same but also at times change through a person's life time. The appreciation of a rose can become more gratifying with age and as such the judgment on the object (rose) will have changed from its original position, creating a change within the experience of observing the rose.

If the experience is not pleasurable then we associate displeasure with such an experience and therefore avoid returning to it. However a person might have to return to the experience, which they find unpleasant and they will still make a judgment of displeasure. In this case one can say that the experience would not have changed. The fact is that the initial experience of displeasure is still different from the second or third time the experience is occurring. For the later experience the knowledge of the displeasure of the preceding experience will make the displeasure even stronger. Moving forward with this stated notion, the argument can be made

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<sup>247</sup> The reaction referred to would be something such as "this is not art, this is shit" or something along the lines. Not all people who view art and lack any artistic experience will provide such a reaction.

that any artistic experience is again just a looping experience or rather similar to the experience of observing a rose. Since the experience and judgment we are having is relative to our knowledge and partially to our moral character, a true artistic experience cannot happen if one is a practicing or engaging person within the field of art.

The following example will demonstrate how we cannot have an aesthetic experience that is specific to art, and will in addition show how art for some people only is a mere decorative experience.

If one is observing an artwork that is challenging and requires a specific amount of commitment then within the notion of specific aesthetic arguments such work should create a form of cathartic enlightenment. Through this experience we are meant to feel something or become aware of something. This may however only apply to people for whom such an experience is new or unrelated, similar to how one can ignore starving children on the TV. If one is attempting to reach an aesthetic experience through art and already have some form of past experience of such experience then the cathartic enlightenment cannot occur. The artistic experience one is searching for has become a normal part of the daily routine. In a way we can argue that the uniqueness of observing an art can be equally and comparable to a normal daily experience. If ones pass-time is spent on the pursue of an artistic form of aesthetic experience, then there is a possibility to acknowledge that once such a person has little experience in watching television, in this case the experience when they do start watching television can be stronger, then the observation of artworks, in some way has a more profound impact on that persons relation to their aesthetic experience or surroundings and vice versa. It is clear that in todays society the desensitisation of people through images visible within cultural, individual and public spaces has allowed for a more complex relation between the experience of specific things and our judgment of such things.



The aesthetic experience can present some form of reward in numerous ways. In the observed research, the link between the need to gain some form of aesthetic experience and the development of humans suggests that an aesthetic experience needs to function towards stimulating our reward center within the brain. The added property that art creates is in some form a phase that should be pursued within the population as an active part of the aesthetic experience. There is not a real observable distinctive difference between an ordinary experience of the surrounding in relation to that of an artistic experience of viewing specific artistic work, if the viewer is one who often pursue such a practice. In the case of the mentioned example, the reasoning is based around the fact that if one is perusing a reward within specific criteria of the aesthetic experience, then that reward will eventually become stagnated. In the case where we observe things over and over again, the reward or stimulus needs to be changed or become more challenging. In so far it helps to observe the evolutionary theory of aesthetic as an example of why specific properties of artistic creation changed throughout history.

Comparing the link between interpretation and knowledge serves to exemplify the argument towards an understanding that an aesthetic experience is an overall experience that occurs continually even though one might not be aware of it. This is the positioning we should observe when it comes to an aesthetic experience and its relation to art within contemporary society. The increasingly stimulating surroundings within the world has developed a characteristic within the aesthetic experience of art that develops towards the need to become something more rare. For a person who does not engage within the practice of observing art their experience of the world is to satisfy the need to be stimulated by their surroundings. One can argue that the development of paintings in the context of today's artist, e.g. the elimination of colours and certain characteristics present within some paintings, is a reflection of this form of stimulating development of the world.

When a painter is engaging within the act of producing a painting and such a painting might be constructed using a limited pallet as a way to react towards our

daily environmental intake of stimulus. An understanding that we are over stimulated and therefore needs to be less stimulated within the artistic work. Now if we apply what we know of how the aesthetic experience function and how such an experience becomes rewarding; its construction and colours etc. have on one level a rewarding aesthetical application, pleasing for the eye, whiles on the other hand the experience of the painting will have the rewarding aspect of viewing an artistic work.

The search for a more in-depth acknowledgement within the work becomes as important. The observation can be seen within the neuroaesthetics research experiments where the visible part of viewing specific things brings about an application of reward. Though one should not ignore the fact that Fine Art, as an application practices is an elitist practice for the few. The application of aesthetics to our surrounding world will continually occur, one that should be explored and encouraged. The outcome of the relation to something that is defined as being Fine Art, these aesthetic experiences are in some form necessary for the few who engage within this field. Even though it is clear that the need of something to view and experience, as something uniquely artistic, is irrelevant and does not affect most people. Most people can live without the need of these experiences. The function of aesthetic in relation to Fine Art is to derive a form of symbiotic understanding between the artistic development and display of works, in relation to our understanding of the surrounding cityscape or our society. This can mean anything from just keeping traditionalist way of hanging paintings to a more explorative viewing of artworks. In this case our reasoning projects a common belief that the experience of an everyday event and that of looking at things that are defined to be art, are done so within the social acceptances of art from a Western prospective.

The difference between an ordinary aesthetic experience and one that is derived from the observation of artworks is in relation to our knowledge of what art is within today's society. People know about Hirst's animals in formaldehyde, or Rothko's colour-field paintings, and this knowledge has created a neurological

visible neuron in their brains that accepts its existence as art, one that cannot be changed unless damaged. One can always make the judgment of the artwork whether it is good or bad similar to Kant's use of taste. However the viewer will acknowledge what they are viewing with a specific context that allows for the subconscious understanding, that what they are viewing is art. In this case the reward mechanic takes place, but the reward is in relation to an understanding of observing something that has a cultural context. Within this context lays the reason for why it is difficult to make people experience a sport event as an artistic work, and why there are specific artist practice that forms an implication of art. This is also a possible reason why some artistic works will become less recognisable as the space by which they inhabit is not recognised as a trait of artistic placement, e.g. specific websites, interventions, or artistic actions. This was the reason why things such as flash-mobs where always going to fail within a context of art as these things became instantly recognisable as a means of entertainment. If everyone had the possibility to put animals in formaldehyde what would happen to these works? We can see this presence of value and art holding a quality of something be a rare construction/object, which people experience as a rare aesthetic interaction.<sup>248</sup> We can observe such a thing very easily within the field of painting.

The place for judgment of artistic work such as painting, fall under this complicated structure. The example I will provide can be seen through two different ways of viewing.

*Observing the difference between a part-time painter and one who has procured an active participation within painting.*

In this case a person who has an experience or knowledge of contemporary painting and is involved within the contemporary art scene, will be able to tell a difference between the amateur artist and the mature artist. However if the observer is a

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<sup>248</sup> Dissanayake., 27-46.

person who lacks a experience of viewing painting or whose focus lay within a specific field of artistic study/historicity, then the difficulty to tell the difference can be more complex. Since their experience is linked with the lack of knowledge, they lack the ability to tell the difference between the paintings, especially if such paintings have an abstract style, or if the comparison is between an amateur flower painter and that of artist such as Tal R. There is a clear difference between certain developments, or styles of painters, though the aesthetic of painting within certain styles are so narrow that a person who lacks the knowledge of painting will not be able to pick out specific artist. (Referring back to artefacts within tribal societies (or any society for that matter). These artefacts are something that is recognisable within that society, e.g. pre-historic tools, modern design objects, specific computer programs, etc. The outcomes of these specific objects are very similar but for people within the society they are easily recognisable products from a specific person or company.)

The development of theories such as proposed by Carlson in relation to the aesthetic experience derive itself from the interlocking relation between the developed human aesthetic experience and the developed world around us. The experience of an environment as an aesthetic experience has a link with how we in some fundamental level experience current structures of art and are mainly concerning the relation between the picturesque experiences. Carlson reasoning around knowledge and experience provides a form of interlinking play. We can still experience things even though we are without the knowledge of such things. However it is difficult to assures if the experience will somehow enlighten a person or not, without the knowledge of certain elements that build up the experience. (Like the exam example.)

People will look and experience art in different ways:

1. A person who has some experience of art and enjoys pictures on their walls for decorative purposes.

2. A person who has experience of art but has a very narrow-minded view and sees only specific things as art.
3. A person who has a complex understanding of art, but views art through a specific knowledge based window, they will acknowledge that anything can be art but will judge each work accordingly to their opinion of what represents good and bad art.
4. A person who has an understanding of all the arts and has a love for anything that is claimed to be within the world of art.

All of these people will make a specific judgment based around the experience of what can be called art. This can be expanded into a more complex structure in an attempt to identify a relation between the aesthetic experience of art and an everyday thing.

One can set up the following criteria:

Art: ( $\psi$ ) an object or event or experience created by an entity that has knowledge of its creation in relation to the creation of such a thing with a metaphysical value.

Experience: ( $\Phi$ ) something that has occurred to an entity.

Aesthetic experience: ( $\beta$ ) an experience through sensory system and the processing of such experience.

Judgment: ( $\theta$ ) an activity of taste placed upon the aesthetic experience.

Agreement: ( $\gamma$ ) a state within judgment opposite of disagreement.

Disagreement: ( $\mu$ ) a state within judgment opposite of agreement.

Observing art in relation to agreement:

$$(\theta\psi \Rightarrow \Phi \wedge \beta \equiv \theta(\mu)) \Rightarrow \top$$

Observing art in relation to disagreement:

$$(\theta\psi \Rightarrow \Phi \wedge \beta \equiv \theta(\gamma)) \Rightarrow \top$$

Observing a experience:

$$\Phi \vdash (\Phi \Leftrightarrow \beta) \oplus (\theta(\gamma \oplus \mu))$$

The above formulae are simplistic constructions on the subject matter. For a more complex adaptation the formulae for the observations will change. Firstly we need to construct a definition of art that is more universal and is able to define anything as art.

If  $\psi$  is art and can hold any property

$\Delta$ : any property imaginable.

Then:

$$\forall \psi \in \Delta(\psi)$$

The observation states that art ( $\psi$ ) holding  $\Delta$  a property is true for any possible property  $\Delta$ .

If a property ( $\Delta$ ) of something ( $x$ ) will exert an experience ( $\Phi$ ).

$$\forall \Phi \in \Delta(x) \equiv \exists \Phi \in \neg \Delta(x)$$

In any case these cannot be totally true, depending on one's view or understanding of things. If one assume the above propositions as true then one can follow it up with.

$$\forall \psi \in \Delta(\psi) \vee (\Phi \vdash (\Phi \Leftrightarrow \beta) \oplus (\theta(\gamma \oplus \mu))) \Leftrightarrow \forall \Phi \in \Delta(x) \equiv \exists \Phi \in \neg \Delta(x))$$

Within this case, art having any property will be true if and only if the person observing art ( $\psi$ ), for the experience to hold to be true, it requires the observer to have satisfied all of the laid out propositions. The existence of the experience validates the existence of the artwork since the property of a thing will produce some form of experience. The relation between the experience and the property of

the object or surrounding experience one is having, is the same as the property of any object considered to be art. If one of these observations is false then the other will be false as well, though a false and true property of the observed experience cannot confirm the existence of such an experience.

Object ( $\alpha$ ) and its property

$$\forall \alpha(x) \equiv \exists \neg \alpha(x)$$

The two distinctive arguments would be:

Art

$$\forall \psi \in \Delta(\psi) \vee (\Phi \vdash (\Phi \Leftrightarrow \beta) \oplus (\theta(\gamma \oplus \mu)) \Leftrightarrow \forall \Phi \in \Delta(x) \equiv \exists \Phi \in \neg \Delta(x))$$

Object

$$\forall \alpha(x) \equiv \exists \neg \alpha(x) \vee (\Phi \vdash (\Phi \Leftrightarrow \beta) \oplus (\theta(\gamma \oplus \mu)) \Leftrightarrow \forall \Phi \in \Delta(x) \equiv \exists \Phi \in \neg \Delta(x))$$

In this case  $(\Phi \vdash (\Phi \Leftrightarrow \beta) \oplus (\theta(\gamma \oplus \mu)) \Leftrightarrow \forall \Phi \in \Delta(x) \equiv \exists \Phi \in \neg \Delta(x))$  is an observation on the experience and judgment made based on such an experience in relation to a property observed.

The difference lays within the semiotic understanding of things in relation to experience and observation. An aesthetic experience and aesthetic as a whole focus on the attainment and understanding of our sensory process. In the case above, the observation provides that an experience no matter what such experience or observation is, will divulge through a specific construction. The example of the horse can be used to illustrate this case, where the observer will undoubtedly see a horse within the picture. However they will not recognise the picture as a horse in a semiotic construction, i.e. this is a horse, the recognition of the experience and viewing will still be that of the person next to them. As such the aesthetic experience in this case viewing a horse should be the same for both. The registration that it is a horse and understanding that it is a horse is different.

## Final thought (form of Concluding end).

Through this research the aim was always to try to understand and come to some reasoning why the experience of art and how such an experience when observing artistic works, is linked and has its groundings via our aesthetic experience and knowledge of such a experience. We can all agree on this notion, and undoubtedly acknowledge how such an interaction occurs. Though this does not often play a role in the discussion when surrounding artistic works or artistic creation. The reason for this is that such a discussion is pointless and 1) it holds up to an unreasonable premise; 2) it does not describe or conclude anything; 3) it does not give any reason for why one is observing a specific artwork or the difference between artworks. Hence the premise is in a way lost or it will function only to give us a slight pleasant feeling of understanding. I would point out that one could make a judgment on an artwork and still agree that it is art if one is taking an active role within the arts.

My own constructed problem is within this *active role within the art*, since if one is active, the ability to enjoy art in all its forms should apply. I should be able to partake in any form of artistic event, action, exhibition etc. and have an equally valuable experience in some form or another. Now it is true that my taste within the art will affect my judgment of the artistic experience in some way, but taste, in my mind should not limit my experience when viewing the artworks. However this does occur.

My dislike of specific forms of art or artistic constructions, are in most case still reliant on this symbiotic relation between aesthetic experience and my knowledge. By becoming more aware of the difference between viewing and experience, actual interaction of an object, an artwork/object and everyday life is one of the reasons why this developed observation of the aesthetic has occurred, I will hence propose a



distinctive list of points surrounding art in relation to our experience of aesthetic as a contextualised observation within my own argument:

- Space: the space that is containing the assumed artwork, this can included a non-physical space.
- The viewer's acknowledgment of the space in relation to the created artwork.
- The viewer's relationship to the space and their understanding of the context by which they are within, in relation to the experience they are having that is required to be confirmed to an artistic model.
- Artists work in relation to a specific style or theory, limiting in range or understanding.
- Artistic works in relation to the space it inhabits.
- Artists as a worker and not a creatively free thinker.

The usefulness of the aesthetic experience in relation to observation in a philosophical, scientific, or psychological way still needs to be researched in more depth. There is a clear path that demonstrates a relation between our human development and the need of aesthetic experience, the need to develop some form of surrounding aesthetics to encourage specific behaviours. The need to keep elitist systematization on the *Fine Art* should be encouraged as a relation to keep the difference between what some people perceive as an aesthetic experience of everyday life to encourage simplistic rewards. The *Fine Art* allows for people to seek something through the interaction of the everyday and that of the observation of art, these different though similar forms of aesthetic experiences act as a predominate buffer for some to keep a specific interest within the world. *Fine Art* is not required for most human beings survival. However the idea of the *Fine Art* being something above the general culture represents a from of irritation that brings about a scaling of cultural activity, in some forms it formulates peoples general aesthetic experience of everyday life and other forms of aesthetic judgment. The knowledge that there exist a certain thing called *Art* and that is sold for millions, helps to bring about the

feeling of pleasure or reward for specific people who do not engage within the arts when observing things that is considered to be low culture.

The aesthetic experience and aesthetic as a whole, function to bring forth visible constructions within our socially constructed world; a world that is becoming more and more monocultural by the help of global interactions. In the case of experience and relation to our needs, the more information driven part becomes the essential tool by which we can become more aware of being a person or individual. Places of art (museums, galleries etc.), such places are endured with delivering a type of aesthetic experience that is meant to construct and idealisation of an artistic experience. The experience being one that is in this context a enlightening experience, unlike religious place of worship were the aesthetic experience brought on by the place itself is meant to heighten the experience of the religious service. (Rothko's chapel in Huston Texas, encapsulates this function). Visiting a church, an art museum, or sitting before the TV in your living room have all element of an aesthetic experience, these experience act to satisfy our own needs and depending on such needs, we tend to choice the places or observation we prefer to engage within. To keep such engagement and active a functional part of our lives, these forms of engagement and experience should be moderated and balanced. The same applies to the creation of artworks; (we can now say that this does follow the Kantian thought process, the discussion relating to subject matter of craft, as well in some forms imitation).

It is for this reason I can make the following proclamation:

*This is an artwork!*

In one way this statement would make this written text into an artwork, which since the made statement will be acknowledge to contain a semiotic property of being an artwork. Even if one would disagree with this adjunction the fact would still be

acknowledge that the text would possess this idea of being an artwork,<sup>249</sup> as such the function of the text does change, the reading and understanding can be changed. The structures of the text and why this text holds certain properties can become as important as what is said within the text. Whiles experience of the text will be dependent on the reader's own internal ability to read and their relationship with such an activity. Either way the outcome will be partly based on ones understanding and agreeableness of what art, or rather the semiotic understanding of what art should hold, and if such understanding should hold a variegating differentiation, i.e. art as one thing, whiles the other being Fine Art etc.

In the end, here is where the problem is. If considerations of artistic practice as a fundamental development of something unique obstruct the interpretation of what art is. The outcome fails to allow for anything to be considered to be art. If we acknowledge my observation through the text, then an agreement can be made that I should on some level if the disinterest from aesthetic qualities in relation to art is made, that a judgment on the work, i.e. a text, should be equal to my observation of a painting, or a photograph, installation etc. The experience of these should in some sense be the same, whiles the internal differentiation and acknowledgement is different. By creating works of art that do not conform to one idea, or a series, the creation might bring this differentiation forwards, since the viewer will lack much to draw from when the observation happens. In the end this idea of working is redundant for most people since we can agree that there is a differentiating debate amongst those who practice specific artistic engagement and those who, have an assumed belief in art as an aesthetic by-product without any real knowledge. Here I am referring to people who say, "*my child could do that*", or people who see that only working in traditional mediums replicating reality is art. In the end one is stuck between the rational observation of artistic practice as a fundamental elitist activity,

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<sup>249</sup> In this case if I where observing this as an artwork by someone else, my reaction would be that of distaste, or rather I would agree that such a text could possess the notion of being an artwork but it would be a work of art that I would not enjoy or take any interest in.

with a general group of people engaging in something similar, and that of the free association of artistic practice. Either way I will still possibly fail to understand art and my relation to art, whiles conducting an observation via Kant, Carlson, and aesthetic experience, scientific analysis, through a miss-interpretive thought process.

## Artworks.

**Alex Katz:** Labor Day 1992, Oil on Canvas, 290x579cm, Saatchi Gallery, London.



**Casper David Friedrich:** Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog, 1818, Oil on Canvas, 98.4x74.8cm, Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg.



**Édouard Manet:** A Bar at the Folies-Bergère (*Un bar aux Folies Bergère*) 1882, Oil on Canvas, 92x139cm, Courtauld Institute of Art, London.





**Elina Brotherus:** Artists and her Model series.



**Janna Holmstedt:** The Construction Of Landscapes.





**Jasper Johns:** White Flag, 1955, Encaustic, oil, newsprint , and charcoal on Canvas, 198.9x306.7cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



**Rembrandt van Rijn:** The Night Watch or The Shooting Company of Frans Banning Cocq (De Nachtwacht) 1642, Oil on Canvas, 363x437cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



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